

IMMIGRATION STORIES IN THE EMERGENT BILINGUAL CLASSROOM:  
REVEALING FUNDS OF KNOWLEDGE AND BRAVE SPACES THROUGH LITERACY  
CURRICULUM

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Erin McNeill

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The purpose of this practitioner inquiry study was to learn from students as they shared their life experiences, drawing from their stories to develop curriculum and instruction in an emergent bilingual classroom. The project argues that when relationships are prioritized with diverse students using a pedagogy of *acompañamiento* (Sepulveda, 2011), classrooms become spaces where students can share family stories, life experiences, and funds of knowledge - that is, the cultural, community, or life experiences that students possess (Moll et al., 1992; Gonzalez et al., 2005).

This study focused on the stories of two high school emergent bilinguals that then were used to develop a culturally responsive framework. In phase one of the study, Nour's digital immigration story focused on her father's journey to America while a classmate created a presentation about Rabia's personal immigration story. In phase two, Ali created two stories that focused on her mother and father's immigration journey and wrote other family stories during the two years of this study. Sources included immigration stories, artifactual literacy projects, student interviews, and written family stories. Data was coded then classified into emerging themes (Cresswell & Poth, 2018). Recommendations based on the study include a call for projects focused on family and community in literacy curriculum, a need for "brave spaces," where "courage" and understanding may be necessary when sharing sensitive information with new audiences (Arao & Clemens, 2013, p.141), and a recognition of how immigration shapes lives. This study also advocates for an asset-based curriculum designed for emergent bilinguals that continually reassesses the texts they produce to inform the design of culturally relevant pedagogies for literacy learning (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay 2010).

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## **Chapter 1: Statement of Problem**

Emergent bilingual learners face many challenges as they integrate into today's communities and public schools. As the immigrant population grows throughout the United States, immigrant students are often "incorporated into communities that have relatively little experience with foreign-born populations" (Lee & Hawkins, 2015, p.42). Without teacher knowledge of life experiences and languages of their students, many students struggle with effectively integrating into schools and their education policies. Due to shortages of bilingual teachers in the U.S., many language learners spend most of the day in dominant English contexts (Brooks & Karathanos, 2009) with little to no connections to their language, culture, communities, and lived experiences (Delpit, 1988). Additionally, with bilingual education laws and litigation frequently changing in the United States, there is "a constant movement in ideas and ideology," causing uncertainty in many schools (Baker & Wright, 2017, p.193). Various researchers (Soloranzo & Yosso, 2001; Comber, 2016; Byfield, 2019; Decur & Dixon, 2004 ) have found that schools oppress instead of empower marginalized students. However, a focus on student assets can combat the uncertainty and oppression of students. Roy and Roxas (2011) used counter-storytelling, a tool to expose and challenge stereotypes, to empower marginalized students and tackle the deficit views held by educators. I have also chosen to use the stories of my students to combat student uncertainty and oppression, focusing on the assets students bring to school through a studying of the lived experiences of my learners. As a teacher-researcher, what can I learn about the lived experiences of my students?

My research begins with a pedagogy of *acompañamiento*, defined as fellowship and engagement in a classroom setting (Sepulveda, 2011), to foreground student stories. I believe

these stories will reveal previous knowledge and background useful in building a culturally responsive curriculum. The disclosure of lived experiences reveals funds of knowledge, defined as knowledge formed by life experiences, family, community, and culture (Gonzalez et al., 2005). These experiences will help to reimagine the curriculum and school policies in a secondary setting to create culturally responsive teaching practices continuously.

Culturally responsive teaching works to “establish bridges (connections) across factors that separate” marginalized students in education settings (Gay, 2018, p. 40). Therefore, as a teacher-researcher, I can accompany students to build relationships through learning, giving students the space to speak about the knowledge and interests they bring to the classroom or their funds of knowledge. Students sharing their funds of knowledge, can help to create these “bridges” Gay (2018, p. 40) imagines to connect students who have different cultures. Through building on what students reveal about their previous experiences, I can work with administration to create school policies that respect students' culture, needs, and experiences. Literacy curriculum can also be created that penetrates the barriers students describe in their work that hinders their understanding of language learning and school policies (Gay, 2018). These pieces of knowledge gathered from students can then act as a springboard to create a units of literacy study based on students' knowledge.

### **My role at the study site**

This research takes place at an urban school in the Midwest with approximately 2700 students. According to the Department of Education's Compass website, the enrollment statistics of Cedar High School, names changed for privacy, reported 87% of students as white. However, the school is experiencing a changing demographic as emergent bilingual students are enrolling at an increasing rate. In the first year of this study, the school year started with eight students

enrolled in one English as a New Language course at the school. At the end of the school year, the language learner team determined that two English as a New Language courses were needed as twenty-four students were now enrolled and identified through state WIDA Access testing as emergent bilingual. At the end of the following school year, the school continued to grow, with a total of forty-seven students identified as language learners. At the beginning of the next school year, our numbers of language learners remained at around forty-eight students enrolled. Many of our students have left, and new students have taken their place - showing that many of our students are still migratory. As the only teacher for emergent bilinguals at Cedar High School, many staff members have sought advice from me as they struggle with the change in demographics and worry about their ability to communicate with students who are learning English. Therefore, I was given an additional role as an ELL Coordinator. One of the tasks as the coordinator is creating professional development opportunities for the high school staff. The lack of preparation for regular classroom teachers to teach emergent bilinguals is an issue in many mainstream classrooms (Lucas & Grinberg, 2008). This new role, to provide curriculum for students and provide professional development for teachers, has increased the need for me to understand my students, to design a culturally responsive curriculum, and share my findings with colleagues.

Additionally, as the ELL coordinator, I help to create schedules for students. Graduation requirements for emergent bilingual learners are a significant issue in the secondary setting. Although requirements vary from state to state, in Indiana, “English Learners must be enrolled in credit-bearing courses and...are expected to graduate in four years” (Indiana Department of Education, 2014). Consequently, all emergent bilinguals, even if they begin to learn English upon arrival at the school, must follow the traditional high school coursework and complete the

same requirements as native English speakers. The only differences in emergent bilinguals' coursework are world language credits available for fluency in a native language and four years of English as a New Language course to meet language arts requirements. This policy also recommends that emergent bilinguals enroll in supplemental English courses as they work toward completing the required courses for graduation. Understandably, the course requirements cause many newcomers to be overwhelmed due to highly technical vocabulary in content courses and required reading levels well above the ability of those first encountering the language. These graduation requirements and barriers in curriculum facing emergent bilingual students contribute to the reasons I need to understand my students further to anticipate how culturally responsive pedagogy can shape their secondary school experiences by focusing on the knowledge and assets they bring. Through tenets of culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2018) and pedagogy of *acompañamiento* (Sepulveda, 2011), I can build projects into my literacy curriculum that will reveal students' funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992). Using what I learn from the stories students tell about their families and interests, I can investigate the support needed in a secondary setting for emergent bilingual students.

### **Purpose of the study**

This study investigates my students' stories to create a culturally responsive literacy curriculum and framework that works toward a positive experience for secondary emergent bilingual learners based on their interests and assets. By putting relationships first through the use of pedagogy of *acompañamiento*, I can create the necessary conditions for students to share funds of knowledge, disclosed through the stories they share. The result is a recursive process

where experiences and knowledges are produced by students and I assess this knowledge to garner their previous insights, interests, and needs. This continuous process of integrating classroom inquiry with curriculum development allows the teacher to prioritize student needs and knowledges, and to put the curriculum second. By focusing on the students' stories, teachers can maintain priority concerning the best ways to support students instead of merely imparting skills and information to students.

The two focal students in this study are from an English as a New Language (ENL) course, where I am the instructor. Both of the students in this study have completed at least two English classes in my classroom as two of the four credits of their approved ENL language arts courses. A pedagogy of acompañamiento working beside my students - creates the relationship between myself and the students to foreground student's sharing their previous knowledge and background. Through students' stories and the funds of knowledge they reveal, I can continuously reimagine the curriculum and school processes using culturally relevant teaching practices. These curriculum choices can then be used in conjunction with the required curriculum to build literacy skills needed to complete graduation requirements in a secondary school setting as well as to connect with students as we create school policies that benefit all students. Most importantly, by listening to the oppression and knowledges students share, I can build bridges for classroom inquiry that supports my students' needs.

### **Philosophical assumptions**

As a young child, I always gravitated to stories, whether it was the stories my family members told at the kitchen table or the books my father and I read together daily, stories and

those who read them or told them shaped my life. Consequently, I chose to teach English for a love for literature, including the value and information gained from the stories others shared. In the first year of my career, I found a passion for teaching students to read. Eventually, my own story changed when my first husband passed away at thirty in an accident. There were many significant changes in my life: moving, a new job, being closer to family, and living alone for the first time in ten years. I began to understand how life experiences ultimately shape our lives and choices; this includes essential stories in our lives concerning how we interact with others. Due to this realization, I considered my interactions with students. Was I as useful as I could be in the classroom? Was I listening to the stories that shaped the lives of my students?

After a year of considering these issues, it became an excellent time to continue making significant life changes, so I enrolled in the Literacy, Culture, and Language Education Ed.D. program. I did not realize that my training with teaching students to read English would also connect to emergent bilingual learners. I just wanted to learn how to teach using the stories of my students at the forefront of my curriculum. I could not have anticipated the changes this Ed.D. program would inspire in my teaching style and life, particularly the ideas I would grow into this dissertation research. My encounters with culture, language acquisition, trauma, and acompañamiento (Sepulveda, 2011) dramatically changed my career path.

After teaching English language arts for twelve years, I had never considered emergent bilinguals, and only had one or two students in my dozen years of teaching who were language learners. Both were proficient by the time they were in my class. Then, as I began in the Ed.D. program, a Speech-Language Pathologist asked me to tutor an emergent bilingual who was failing English 9 due to his reading skills. This experience began my transition to teaching



emergent bilinguals. The following year, my teaching career drastically changed. In the twelve previous years, I taught English Language Arts to upper-level juniors and seniors. Each year I taught dual credit or AP English, and there was very little room in this curriculum for analyzing the stories and experiences of one another.

Then, there was a job opening posted at our community school. During the interview, they asked my feelings on EL students. This was an unusual request for a posting in English Language Arts. When offered the position, a condition was to teach one English as a New Language (ENL) course in addition to the English language arts courses posted with the position. In my third year in this position, we have added forty more students, and 89% of students' literacy scores measured by the WIDA test have risen. My students are learning to read in English, and I am learning new perspectives from my students daily. The ENL classroom has shattered many of the assumptions I held before about teaching students, due to listening to the stories they tell me. Students have tragic tales and incredible success stories, and I can learn as much from them as they can from me. But first, I have to build relationships with them by listening for their funds of knowledge to develop a culturally responsive literacy curriculum.

My experiences with diversity in the classroom and daily life were very minimal until I began college. However, I now work in a school where I serve as an advocate for all emergent bilingual students. This current research journey stemmed from a student, Belen, all names are changed to protect the identity of the students, stating, "But I don't ask questions in other classes because I don't want to talk and the teacher make fun of my accent." This statement was Belen's response to my questions when she appeared at my classroom door before 7 a.m. concerning her tendency to not ask for help in Biomedical Science. Her embarrassment was evident. Belen had

been in emergent bilingual English classes for six months, she spoke three languages and was learning English as her fourth. Her proficiency scores had risen from a level 1 to 4 in six short months, and she was embarrassed to speak aloud in English. This moment was the impetus for creating a practitioner inquiry project focused on how I, as an educator, could discover ways for emergent bilingual students to teach others about their strengths, experiences, and knowledge, all while sharing their experiences and learning literacy. Could I validate language learners' knowledge and expertise by creating a culturally relevant pedagogy based on the stories and experiences students were sharing?

### **Transforming my Teaching**

When I began reading published research to frame my own ideas about teaching emergent bilinguals in a culturally responsive way, one article caused me to pause and reassess my own ideas. In the words of Ladson-Billings (1998) “far too many teachers in U.S. schools possess only a surface understanding of culture – their own or anyone else’s” (p. 261). Was I missing out on what my students could teach me? If so, how could I create conditions to transform my own thinking about culture. As I continued to assess the ideas of literacy scholars, I was drawn to theories that would allow me to learn about my own practice as I listened to students describe their own experiences both inside and outside of classrooms.

These experiences have shaped my worldview to create what I now believe is a positive space and method to teach literacy skills to emergent bilingual students. Using a pedagogy of *acompañamiento* that foregrounds a student’s previous knowledge and background to reveal funds of knowledge can lead to the disclosure of students’ understandings of experiences and

assets. These revelations can build culturally relevant teaching practices as I consider the supports and curriculum students need in a secondary setting.

## **Research Questions**

As a teacher, student, and observer in this study and classroom, I spent many hours listening to my students' stories. The students in this study are from multiple locations across the world and are learning to speak English as an additional language. The students' speak more than one language, in a predominantly white, English-speaking school. The main question that guided this practitioner inquiry was:

1. What am I learning from these students?

Then taking this knowledge to answer a subsequent question:

2. How do I use this knowledge to develop culturally relevant pedagogy?

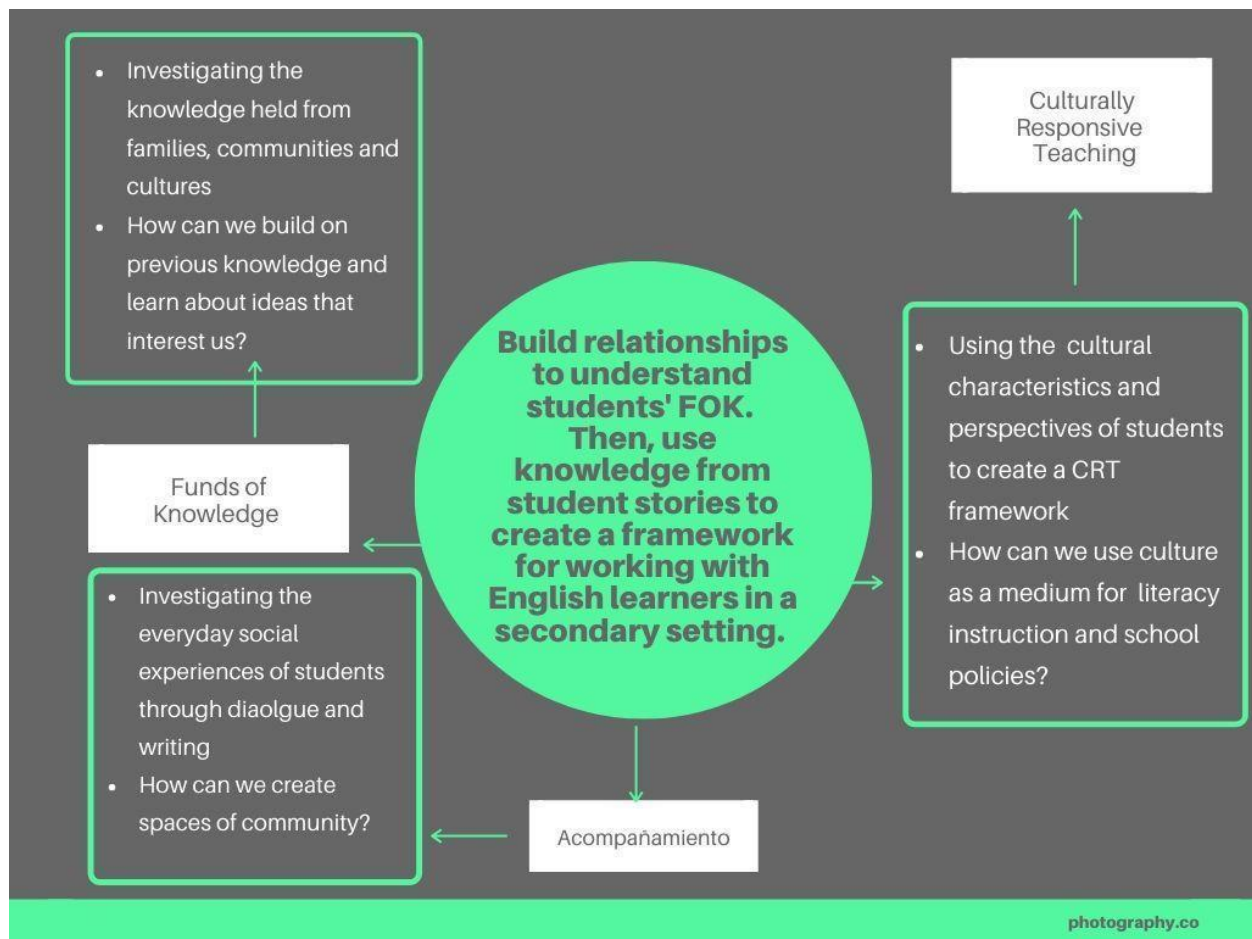
## **Conceptual Framework**

Throughout this study, I will argue that using a pedagogy of *acompañamiento*, defined as fellowship and engagement with one another in a classroom setting (Sepulveda, 2011, p. 561), to foreground student's stories, will reveal prior knowledge and background that is useful to building culturally responsive curriculum. Through this disclosure of lived experiences, students acknowledge an essential idea. Then, funds of knowledge reveal student ideas formed by life experiences, family, community, and culture (Gonzalez et al., 2005). These experiences will assist in reimagining the curriculum to use culturally responsive teaching practices continuously and recursively. Culturally responsive teaching works to "establish bridges (connections) across factors that separate" marginalized students in education settings (Gay, 2018, p. 40). By listening to my students' stories and considering their lived experiences, they can help create new

inquiries and supports focused on marginalized language learners' assets through a culturally responsive curriculum and framework of support in a secondary school setting. It can also teach me new ways to approach, teach and assess my students.

For example, by using the knowledge gained from the first class of students who created immigration stories, I learned my students felt the need for a community within our classroom where they felt respected and safe. In an effort to transform my pedagogy, we continued to use group projects that offered positive reflections of one another's work and incorporated more places in the curriculum where community conversations and reflections were utilized.

Additionally, the immigration stories, where students told of their immigration journey or the migration journey of their families, taught me that students enjoyed presenting information about their families. Again, I used this information to transform my current practice; I continued to build literacy projects that offered a space for reflection about experiences or memories with their families through interviews, memoirs, and artifactual literacy projects. The conceptual framework map is below. In the next section, I explain the diagram by defining the terms and analyzing previous research using these theories.



## Chapter 2: Literature Review

This study aims to investigate students' stories to create a culturally responsive literacy curriculum and framework that works toward a positive experience for secondary emergent bilingual students based on their interests and assets. Relationships come first through the use of a pedagogy of acompañamiento. Through relationships, I can create the necessary conditions for students to share funds of knowledge within their stories. The result is a recursive process where

experiences and knowledges are produced by students and assessed to garner their previous insights, interests, and needs, all focused on creating a culturally responsive curriculum.

Therefore, these three theories create my theoretical framework.

To create an environment where students feel valued and part of a culture of belonging (Sepulveda, 2011), we start with a pedagogy of *acompañamiento* where teachers work with students to create relationships and understand the barriers faced by marginalized parties.

### **Creating relationships in my classroom using a pedagogy of *acompañamiento***

The pedagogy of *acompañamiento*, as theorized by Sepulveda (2011), forms the basis of my conceptual framework to create the necessary conditions for students to share funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992) in the classroom as a path for designing culturally relevant curriculum based on the assets of students. Sepulveda argues using students' everyday lives becomes the catalyst for this type of pedagogy. Student experiences form the basis of getting students to use literacies to explain their lives. Sharing daily and social experiences with teachers also creates a safe space to explore new relationships with adults and one another.

This theory of accompaniment (Sepulveda, 2011, p.558) stems from Goizueta's (2001) work, who states, "accompaniment includes not only 'being' with another, but also 'doing' with another." Sepulveda took these ideas literally when focusing on his students. He believes the relationship between teacher and youth when concerning emergent bilingual students should be completely different than traditional associations. He calls for this relationship to be, "one that engages in walking with the Other in ways that promote a deeper bonding and critical dialogue between equal subjects" (Sepulveda, 2011). To create an affirming relationship between teachers and students, the teacher must work, speak, and walk side by side with emergent bilingual learners.

Sepulveda's practice of teaching through building relationships with students has informed many aspects of my classroom, including the analysis presented here. I believe that this pedagogy of doing with another creates the groundwork for completing research with students that foregrounds their stories. My teaching practices and research apply Sepulveda's philosophy of *acompañamiento* as students create projects and share stories as the centerpiece of my classroom.

I imagine a classroom based on a pedagogy of *acompañamiento* to function by including all members of the classroom working on the same projects, including teachers and teacher aides (as shown in a part of this study through the artifactual literacy project), or adults working with a group of students to contribute to their group project. Working as a community opens a brave space, theorized as a place "to emphasize the need for courage" (Arao & Clemens, 2013, p. 141), where I tell my own story first, then ask my students to share their personal stories. My classroom is a brave space as they can choose to share their stories and experiences as I share my own. All teacher aides in my room are also required to follow this model of doing and sharing with students to accompany students in their educational journey as they work to gain literacy skills. Doing this work with my students is one way to learn about them and create the groundwork for classroom research and inquiry.

Sepulveda (2011) also theorized transnational migrant students, such as those in my study, needed *acompañamiento* as they learned how to journey through school and curriculum. *acompañamiento* is the foundation of my research because the relationship with is necessary before students share their experiences with me as a teacher-researcher. Over the last three years, I have found that my students ask more questions and talk about their learning with me as I sit with them and complete the work than they do if I am at my desk in the classroom. The

pedagogy of acompañamiento is essential to my emergent bilingual students for several reasons. First, by completing the work side by side, my students ask questions that lead me to realize what scaffolding techniques I have ignored in my instruction or to decide what part of my direction is working well. This type of reflection gleaned from working among my students will inform my curriculum as I clarify my instructions for the current or future students.

Additionally, the use of these classroom conversations as we complete tasks together also leads to communications concerning their everyday social practices (Sepulveda, 2011). My classroom becomes a place where we learn and struggle together, creating a workshop environment to gain literacy skills together – an alternative space on school grounds (Sepulveda, 2011) where students can feel comfortable. By working together, students can see teachers and aides completing the same process and struggle. The students must feel secure to conduct classroom inquiry focused on their oppression and knowledge. Through conversations about everyday social practices, the groundwork is present for an alternative space where students can share more about their lived experiences and supports they may need.

The students in my study spend every other day in my room, and I spend time talking to each student. The students and I talk about their classes, missing work, and the help they need. I write down anything they ask for help with and follow up the next time I see them. Through these conversations and the fieldnotes I have taken concerning our discussions over the last three years, students have asked for tutors, asked for help with school or family issues, and asked questions about going to school in America. These conversations are essential to my students because they provide classroom space to talk about assumptions concerning their knowledge about the school and their questions that stem from everyday experiences to significant concerns about their future possibilities. Viewing the classroom space this way has allowed us to share our



stories and create relationships - my students know that I will talk to them about school and life each time I see them. Therefore, these conversations become a part of my field notes when I learn something new about my students; I can record these new ideas and consider ways to bring these interests or concerns into our curriculum.

Consequently, through these conversations, I can begin to understand why a particular strategy used in my classroom or someone else's classroom is not reaching them and consider new supports to reach students. I can reflect on the oppression and experiences they share in these moments and try to understand each student based on the everyday social experiences they share. Through using a pedagogy of accompaniment, as Sepulveda recommends, I have created the conditions to learn about the funds of knowledge my students bring to school as they share their stories and experiences, which has allowed me to build on the knowledges they hold.

Sepulveda used this framework in his study with emergent bilingual students to build relationships as a catalyst to get students interested in literacy skills. The student population in his study was high school, undocumented, Mexican students. Sepulveda used the global knowledge his students held as they created poetry and engaged in storytelling about their lives, but, most importantly, cultivated relationships through doing with one another. He focused on how to build a curriculum by using the learner's perspectives first, then concentrated on the writing curriculum. He explains, "These methods built on the students' own everyday social experiences to dialogue, reflect, and write. Building positive relationships with them and creating alternative spaces on school grounds where identities were validated, but also examined were critical pillars, "creating "the process of accompanying youth in a more holistic manner..." (Sepulveda, 2011, p.551). His approach to these students created a positive relationship with an adult in a school where student relationships were not previously valued. To follow Sepulveda's

lead, I complete the same tasks my students complete – a method imagined from a pedagogy of *acompañamiento* - and design projects that allow students to tell their own stories.

The emergent bilinguals in Sepulveda's study needed space where they continue to cultivate literacy skills as well as validate the knowledge they already know. The creation of this space is why accompanying students worked in his classroom. In essence, relationships are necessary for language learners as they need notions of safety and community in the school. Sepulveda then used his knowledge to create a space where they could work on literacy activities together. He had conversations with the students as they worked together, built on a pedagogy of *acompañamiento* (Sepulveda, 2011). Many researchers have theorized classrooms as new spaces to tell stories and collaborate (Torrez et al., 2017), and to create an alternate space on school grounds where identities can be validated (Campano et al., 2016). These classrooms are a space where the lines between work and play can be blurred to allow movement between expert and novice roles (Hull & James, 2007).

Although research concerning *acompañamiento* in education is not readily available, some scholars have used accompaniment with refugee research. As many of my students are also immigrants, this is particularly relevant to my inquiry. Hampson (2014) and his colleagues define their work with accompaniment and refugees as moving “beyond a mere delivery of services through offering companionship, active listening, and solidarity, focusing on individuals’ personal needs and concerns” (p.7). Here the focus is on the whole person first. This idea fits my conceptual framework by claiming the theme of accompaniment by centering all the attention on a student. Through learning about the student's life and experiences while listening to stories that reveal funds of knowledge to build relationships, then building and rebuilding curriculum and school policies to foster a classroom and school focused on empathy,

compassion, and understanding of and for one another following tenets of culturally responsive teaching.

### **Challenging deficit views of emergent bilinguals**

The goal of the study is to begin with a pedagogy of *acompañamiento*, as theorized by Sepulveda (2011), to create the necessary conditions for students to share funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992) in the classroom as a path for designing culturally relevant curriculum based on the assets of students. Therefore, a significant part of my research study focuses on foregrounding funds of knowledge to resist deficit views surrounding emergent bilinguals. Moll, Amanti, Neff, and Gonzalez (1992) pioneered this work, stating, “the primary purpose” of their research with students living in the borderlands of Mexico and America was to “develop innovations in teaching that draw upon knowledge and skills found in local households” (p. 132) - their definition of funds of knowledge. Therefore, although deficit views are prevalent in many schools, using the pieces of knowledge students hold can call attention to different aspects of learners as a challenge deficit views. Researchers in this section feature knowledge of students as an asset in an attempt to eradicate deficit views.

Historically, research studies concerning emergent bilinguals were often deficit oriented. One literature review, commissioned by the U.S. Department of Education reviewed “over 300 studies” of bilingual education (Baker & de Kanter, 1981, p. 1). This review by Baker and de Kanter (1981) faced criticism due to the conclusion that “too little was known about educating language minorities to prescribe a specific remedy” (p.3). The use of the word “remedy” highlights this deficit view as a problem in need of remedy, not as an asset of learning a new language in a global society. This view of language as an issue supports an assimilationist ideology to focus on learning the English language and the dominant culture as the goal for all

students of schools in the United States. To further this claim, Baker and de Kanter (1981) state, “the case for the effectiveness of transitional bilingual education is so weak that exclusive reliance on this instructional method is clearly not justified” (p.1). This claim that bilingual education cannot be justified caused a team at the University of Texas to review the methodology Baker and de Kanter used throughout their literature review, as these conclusions could hinder funding for transitional bilingual education. The researchers at the University of Texas (Yates et al., 1983) saw this as a significant issue with the number of non-English speaking students in the U.S. Consequently, Yates and others (1983) recommended further research concerning the recommendations given by Baker and de Kanter due to many methodological errors.

Additionally, further criticism came when Baker and de Kanter recommended teaching in the child’s native tongue was not justified through their review of literature. Current funds of knowledge research (Lee & Hawkins, 2015; Oleviera, 2015; Garcia & Guerra, 2016) shows that the use of knowledge students hold, like home language and other understandings, is vital in educating emergent bilinguals. Researchers in the last two decades also disagree with Baker and de Kanter’s claim. They argue the use of native language is essential, stating, “bilingual education is not the cause of dropping-out of United States school - but it may be the cure” (Crawford & Krashen, 2007; as cited in Baker & Wright 2017). Foregrounding the languages, knowledges, and experiences students hold can create opportunities for learning about one another in conjunction with language learning.

Willings (1985) also considered the effectiveness of the study by Baker and de Kanter (1981) using a meta-analysis approach to review twenty-three of the twenty-eight studies they analyzed. Her goal was to determine if bilingual education and transitional programs that

foreground previous knowledge of students is an effective method of instruction for emergent bilingual students. Her results were much different, even examining the same studies. She found, “overall significantly, positive effects for bilingual education” (Willings, 1985, p. 277).

Therefore, Willing’s conclusion stated that English-only programs were less successful than language programs that foreground a student’s assets, the home language in this case, as students did not achieve success across the curriculum in English-only programs.

After finding the previous research study inconclusive, the Department of Education commissioned a new study to consider funds allocated for bilingual education. This study conducted by the General Accounting Office (GAO) (1987) to “assess the degree of correspondence between research knowledge on bilingual education and statements by department officials about that knowledge” (p.2). They found policymakers to have a deficit view of emergent bilinguals, citing thirty-one statements that were oppositional to a native language component in bilingual education from the Department of Education. Next, the GAO commissioned experts to review the literature and found that the majority of their experts disagreed with the department’s previous conclusions about teaching emergent bilingual learners. The GAO (1987) found:

Only 2 of the 10 experts agree with the department that there is insufficient evidence to support the law’s requirement of the use of native language to the extent necessary to reach the objective of learning English. Second, 7 of the 10 believe that the department is incorrect in characterizing the evidence as showing the promise of teaching methods that do not use native languages. (p.3)

Therefore, this report shows the inconsistencies in previous studies as well as creates an impetus for an educational program that relies on the assets students bring to schools, such as home

language, and alternative teaching methods for emergent bilinguals that use expertise students bring to schools. Also, this study shows the advantages of “alternative approaches to teaching English to ELLs” (Grooms, 2012, p.120), which include highlighting the knowledge and experience students already hold. After many research studies, the deficit view was not useful in the pedagogical methods used to educate emergent bilinguals. However, using the assets of language learners was consistently advantageous to the students. This idea is also prevalent in new research studies.

These trends follow an approach by Ladson-Billings (1999), who argued for an asset-based pedagogy that foregrounds students' culture and knowledge as strengths in the classroom. Ladson-Billings (1999) also believed that the curriculum should build on students' prior knowledge by incorporating it into the curriculum. These ideas are echoed in the literature of many current researchers, as they imagine literacy as an avenue to understand cultural and social ideas (Bogum, 2007; Pappamihel 2002; Kanno & Applebaum, 1995). Additionally, Orlenna and Gutierrez (2006) argued that emergent bilinguals were framed as problematic, causing pedagogy and research to suffer when considering learners' literacies. They call for educators to “seek more appropriate and thoughtful ways” (Gutierrez & Orlenna, 2006, p.506) of describing and teaching learners. In essence, using the assets of emergent bilinguals, such as their cultural background, can change a deficit-based narrative as current researchers argue below.

One example is a study focused on teachers of immigrant students, Lee and Hawkins considered how communities were receiving immigrants, especially rural communities that had “relatively little experience with foreign-born populations” (2015, p. 40). In their observations of rural schools, they found the education of emergent bilinguals was left up to only a few educators, one or two per 85 to 200 students, and that very few resources were allocated to the

emergent bilingual students who were also taught in isolation from the rest of the students. The emergent bilingual staff in these schools believed themselves to be the advocates for language learners. Unfortunately, teachers outside of the ESL programs also made anti-immigration comments following the discourse of the communities. These deficit discourses “suggested that ‘illegal’ immigrants were costing taxpayers money and were dangerous” (Lee & Hawkins, 2015, p. 48). At the conclusion of this study, the authors argued assimilation policies are not the answer for emergent bilinguals, but rather integrating students into the school through a focus on students’ “cultural backgrounds” (Lee & Hawkins, 2015, p. 57). In addition to using the knowledge and experience of emergent bilinguals, Olvera (2015) found changing the deficit views of educators started with interviewing students to understand their challenges. In her research study, Olvera focused on ways to improve the deficit views of educators. One recommended strategy was to question the “power and privilege” in the curriculum instead of assigning blame by assuming students are not able to learn (p. 88). Additionally, Olvera (2015) believes teachers should experience learning a second language to understand “students’ linguistic background, their ability to engage in their culture, and their self-identity” (p.89). If learning a language is not a possibility, listening to the barriers and struggles students face through conversations and interviews is another option to break down deficit views. Emergent bilinguals hold knowledge and experiences that can inform curriculum and create supports for students. In a similar study where the opinions of educators were analyzed, Garcia and Guerra found educators’ previous beliefs concerning the family backgrounds of their students were over-generalized (2016). They recognized that “such views seem to hinder their ability to appreciate the resources or the funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992) in every family and to view teaching and learning as an interactive process” (Garcia & Guerra, 2016, p.159). These beliefs about

changing educators viewpoints are similar to the other research studies in the remainder of this section who argue to reverse the deficit view of emergent bilinguals, students need a place to share their knowledges, experiences, and oppressions (Callahan, 2005; Learned 2016; Roy & Roxas, 2011; Shapiro, 2014) following the research set in motion by Moll and his colleagues (1992).

In research with refugees, Roy and Roxas (2011) explored the deficit views teachers held toward specific refugee, Somali-Bantu students. These views influenced the discourse of teachers with students causing “missed opportunities” for building relationships and making connections to refugee students (Roy & Roxas, 2011, p.521). Many of the teachers’ views of deficit stemmed from a lack of training for school staff to understand the cultures and oppressions faced by the refugee students entering their communities. One issue in these schools began with the belief that students and parents were solely responsible for learning. The school leaders and teachers continued as usual, even with a group of students who held new cultures and beliefs than those previously in the building. They were “shifting the blame from schools to students and parents” (Roy & Roxas, 2011, p.528). To combat these missed opportunities, the researchers used storytelling to disclose knowledges and feelings of students as they were disciplined for issues at school considered traditional in their religion and culture, such as wearing a headscarf. Additionally, the researchers used their inquiry to focus on the knowledge the refugee students held concerning school and lack of formal education. By listening to the stories students shared, they dispelled the belief many teachers had expressed that education was not a part of the Somalian culture. After their study, Roy and Roxas (2011) argued: “educators should spend time investigating students’ strengths” (p. 536). Therefore, using classroom inquiry to discover knowledges and experiences of students was the answer to deficit views held by



educators within their study. Through listening to the stories of the refugees, educators were able to form connections and offer supports to immigrant students.

Another example of using stories students hold to resist deficit views of learners starts with preservice teachers. Franquiz, Salazar & Denicolo (2011) argue that preservice teachers should share their stories to understand their knowledges, oppressions, and experiences. This activity, they believe, will allow preservice teachers to transfer these ideas to their future students. Participants in Franquiz's study wrote memoirs concerning their oppressive experiences in schools - to reveal their own internalized views of students and themselves. The researchers believed an understanding of the preservice teachers' race and culture through reflective writing, can bring a new understanding of the consciousness held by the students they will teach. At the end of this course, participants valued relationships to "identify student's needs and incorporate them into the curriculum" and "to create assignments that engage students in learning more about their own families' intergenerational experiences with immigration" (Franquiz et al., 2011, p. 292). Therefore, through the exercises in this study, preservice teachers began to realize the importance of the funds of knowledge their students have. The ideas of the participants in this study echo my thoughts about classroom inquiry that uncovers oppression and family knowledge to understand and support students in school settings.

In a similar study where Shapiro (2014) used experiences of students to combat deficit views, he argues that a deficit "ideology is reflected in educational practices that tend to reify, White, monolingual, US-students as the norm and present EL students as the 'other'" (p. 387). By othering speakers of other languages, this reifies the deficit view of emergent bilingual students. Consequently, educational practices may need to be modified for the educational attainment of learners. Shapiro argues that schools have an overreliance on the English language,

due to misunderstandings about those who speak other languages and their inability to achieve at the same level, caused in part by the scores of standardized tests, which perpetuate deficit views of immigrant students. Shapiro (2014) focused on “engaging student perspectives” to explore their experiences and knowledges to combat deficit discourses in schools (p.388). The students in Shapiro’s (2014) study protested the deficit views they saw in their school due to a published article stating the language learners’ test scores were “even lower” than those identified as low-income students (p.389). In his interviews with students concerning their experience in the school, he found the deficit view to be evident. Additionally, he found the students capable of literacy skills through their interviews about the knowledges they held from family and previous school experiences. However, the school did not allow students to voice their observations of the school’s treatment of emergent bilinguals or to share the knowledges they held. Shapiro recommends schools focus on the collective funds of knowledge of emergent bilinguals across the curriculum by listening to their voices to combat deficit views.

Similarly, Brooks and Karathanos (2009) echo the researchers in this section. They argue, “rather than recognizing culture and language as essential to EL students’ connections between their schema and key content-area concepts, educators frequently view diverse languages and cultures from a deficit...” (Brooks & Karathanos, 2009, p. 47). Again, to fight a view of students from a deficit perspective, the researchers recommended “recognizing culture and language as essential” (Brooks & Karathanos, 2009, p. 47). They recommend adding the voices of students and their cultures as an integral part of the curriculum. To effectively integrate emergent bilinguals to the school and curriculum, educators must focus on “language, culture, prior knowledge, and experience are the foundation of EL students’ meaning-making processes” (Brooks & Karathanos, 2009, p 48). Their argument is to integrate these ideas into the literacy

curriculum, including making connections to the texts or lectures in the classroom. When students focus on integrating their knowledges and experiences into the curriculum, this foregrounds their assets to combat the deficit views of emergent bilinguals. Additionally, these student connections can lead to new classroom inquiry and supports. Consequently, if students' previous knowledges and experiences are at the forefront through teacher expectations and relationships, "higher levels of language alongside academic content" can be achieved (Callahan, 2005, p.324).

The research in this section highlights the deficit views of emergent bilinguals. However, the use of relationships, stories, and knowledge of students can create conditions for environments based on the strengths of students. I will argue one idea used to adjust deficit views is to foreground the knowledge students hold, as shown by Moll and his colleagues in the next section (1992).

### **Funds of knowledge origins and use in this study**

My students have knowledge based on their life experiences and from their culture or community – defined as funds of knowledge (Gonzalez et al., 2005; Moll et al., 1992). These authors (Moll & Amanti, 2005; Gonzalez et al., 2005; Moll et al., 1992) argue effective teaching is to use students' funds of knowledge to build a curriculum that is interesting and valuable to students. I believe we must first follow a pedagogy of accompaniment (Sepulveda, 2011) to create a relationship with students in order to learn about their funds of knowledge. The use of students' previous knowledge is the purpose of my study - to reveal information about a student's previously held experience through stories that they can bring to the classroom to gain literacy skills in a curriculum that is culturally responsive and engaging. This argument was also

evident in a literature review concerning funds of knowledge by Llopart and Esteban-Guitart (2018), who found the most widely used definition of funds of knowledge is Moll's (1992). The focus of his explanation is "historically-accumulated and culturally-developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being" (p.133). The authors found this knowledge should be integrated into curriculum as it helps students in school as they learn literacy skills.

This term originated through research in U.S.-Mexican homes by Velez-Ibanez and Greenberg (1992), studying ways to counteract the deficit model of schools in an attempt at educational reform. Their advice was to use the strategic and cultural resources they termed as funds of knowledge to build relationships among teachers, students, and parents (Velez-Ibanez & Greenberg, 1992, p. 313). The considerations of the researchers were historical power and economic issues faced by Mexican immigrants to determine the "impressive range of skills" necessary for barter and survival among those studied (Velez-Ibanez & Greenberg, 1992, p. 319). The authors imagined how each generation of family members served as a point of reference to learn these skills. As Moll (2019) states, funds of knowledge is a theory that can create an "opportunity for teachers, as part and parcel of their pedagogy, to identify and establish the educational capital or families often assumed to be lacking any such resources" (p. 132). Using this "educational capital" (Moll, 2019, p. 132) moves toward an asset based classroom where the knowledges of students are foregrounded. Students' stories are a place where their cultural resources are revealed and can then be used strategically in the classroom.

These ideas also echo the findings from the first study investigating funds of knowledge conducted by Moll and his colleagues (1992), who focused on three critical areas for students:

household dynamics, classroom practices, and after school groups (1992, p. 132). They investigated students' learning at home and found that funds of knowledge are something "motivated by the children's interests and questions," meaning the students learn what they are interested in by interacting and asking adults. Hence, the adults are not the only ones initiating the teaching of new skills and knowledge (Moll et al., 1992, p. 134). All of the areas come together to influence funds of knowledge students bring to the classroom. This knowledge can be used for literacy skill development as students build on prior knowledge or experiences to find meaning within the texts we study or through the writing activities we complete. From a learner's perspective, detailing funds of knowledge they already know can serve as a way to promote previous expertise and family knowledge. This information doesn't have to come solely from research studies in a student's home. In essence, it can be gathered and used by teachers based on the stories students share in the classroom to create a curriculum informing a culturally relevant teaching approach.

The popularity of this theory in education was the result of several studies by Gonzalez, Moll & Amanti (2005), and their team, as they studied "everyday practices," explicitly questioning the ways these practices are constructed (p. 1). They studied the methods from three views, the anthropologist's perspective, the teacher's opinion, and the educational researcher's view; the researchers focused on their belief that "educational processes can be greatly enhanced when teachers learn about their student's everyday lives" (Gonzalez et. al., 2005, p.6). As they studied bilingual students, they were struck by how students' lives were not incorporated into the curriculum and realized how substantial funds of knowledge could be when considering education practices. Their findings echoed the original study's view, "The more participants can

engage and identify with the topic matter, the more interest and motivation they will have” (Gonzalez et. al., 2005, p.9). Therefore, classrooms, just like research studies, must include experiences and ideas that students are familiar with to motivate and interest students. In fact, revealing funds of knowledge through storytelling in classrooms is one way to reveal their interests. When considering stories as a source to reveal these knowledges, Moll (2019) states, “Funds of knowledge are also an essential aspect of the story that members of a family create about themselves as a family, of the self understanding of who they are...” (p.134), and using these knowledges in the curriculum can mediate their ideas of self. I argue this is especially useful as they make connections with their peers in a school environment where they are struggling to fit in due to language and race barriers. Curriculum based on prior experiences legitimizes their knowledge.

Gonzalez (2005) and her colleagues found ways to incorporate family experiences and dynamics as well as cultural artifacts into the curriculum to understand the everyday lived experiences of those they teach. This foundational study has also influenced my research to find ways to incorporate cultural artifacts and students’ stories in the classroom. However, at the end of this text, the researchers also question “broader issues of social class, ideology, and power” in schools, and call for educators and researchers to be aware of these constructs as they understand and integrate funds of knowledge, especially with multilingual and multicultural audiences (Gonzalez et. al., 2005. p. 276). Therefore, listening to students express what they know and talk about their everyday experiences can be a catalyst to learn about funds of knowledge students hold, which can also inform classroom instruction through a focus on the previous knowledge held by students.

Additionally, after reviewing ninety-three articles concerning funds of knowledge, Llopart and Esteban-Guitart (2018) found a vital component of funds of knowledge research is to use “material produced by the students themselves in order to detect their FoK [funds of knowledge] and simultaneously link this material to the curriculum content and school activities” (p. 150). In other words, the students in Llopart and Esteban-Guitart’s study reveal their everyday lived experiences and knowledge gained from those experiences, then their teachers studied the knowledge produced and linked their curriculum to the information they obtained from the students’ work.

My study defines funds of knowledge as life experiences, family, community, and culture (Gonzalez et al., 2005) combined with the everyday social experiences where students learn (Llopart and Esteban-Guitart, 2018). Throughout this study, these definitions will first help to create a curriculum that reveals life and social experiences. Then I will analyze the materials students produce to identify the knowledges and oppression held by students. In a recursive process, I will then create and reimagine previous supports and classroom inquiry based on the revelations in their everyday experiences. The following research studies also follow a pattern of revealing funds of knowledge to gain new ideas of how to build curriculum knowledges of students in literacy practices.

### ***Literacy research that displays funds of knowledge in other studies***

Many current researchers, detailed below, have also found funds of knowledge to be a useful tool in conjunction with literacy development. Varga-Dobai (2018) used the often-cited definition of Moll to connect funds of knowledge with the tenets of culturally responsive

pedagogy, in her research conducting a multimodal writing project. Through her students' presentation of a multimodal Cultural Selfie slideshow, Varga-Dobai (2018) learned about the funds of knowledge one student brought to the classroom and her family which were "evident in her language skills as an interpreter and in her ability to show care for others" (p. 118). The design of this project shows preservice teachers how important it is to investigate their funds of knowledge to interrogate the future ideas and practices that will inform their interactions with students. It focused on four aspects of their identity - family member, community member, literacy expert, and teacher (Varga-Dobai, 2018). She concluded that this activity helped not only with literacy skills such as writing, speaking, and listening, but also allowed students to "recognize their own strengths and biases" (Varga-Dobai, 2018, p. 128). The author focused on self-reflexive practices to show preservice teachers the importance of incorporating everyday lived experiences into the curriculum of their future students. Self-reflexive practices can be a useful tool in all classrooms as teachers learn about funds of knowledge in everyday experiences and use this knowledge to build a curriculum. Consequently, my study will use self-reflexive practices with students to create immigration stories and share subsequent stories as a catalyst for determining the funds of knowledge, among other experiences, held in my classroom.

Sebolt (2018) found funds of knowledge is also a useful tool for family engagement within the emergent bilingual classroom. In her research, Sebolt spent over fifty hours in the homes of two of her students, and she found that her ideas of teaching and family engagement transformed due to the lessons she learned about the funds of knowledge held within these families. The evidence she gained about funds of knowledge allowed her to build an asset-based curriculum for her students. She cautions that deficit thinking in schools can "lead to the belief



that it is the teacher's job to educate the parents about the school's expectations so that they can fit into the school's paradigm" (Sebolt, 2018, p. 132). However, many parents are already aware of the educational expectations of their children. Due to the interviews conducted with students and parents, both parties expressed that parent involvement in schools was very different in the home country. However, parents were still very interested in what was happening in their children's U.S. schools, even if they were not participating in the same ways as those parents educated in U.S. schools. By learning about the cultures and understandings of students and parents toward schools, teachers can transform their preconceived ideas about parental involvement and instead incorporate the strengths and values of the family into the curriculum. Additionally, by including a curriculum that invites students to share the lived experiences of their parents or family members, teachers can also learn about attitudes and historical or cultural notions about school. This type of curriculum can lead to the incorporation of funds of knowledge in the school setting based on the assets students bring when they enter the school. It can also lead to creating a culturally responsive curriculum.

Also, Johnson and Johnson (2016) found that "getting to know students' families provides a window into ELL's home cultures and can broaden teachers' perspectives" (p.106). The difference in this study is that the researchers asked students to develop and teach lessons based on their interests and family interests, tapping into their funds of knowledge. It is similar to my own as it asked students to bring their funds of knowledge into the classroom through presentations. The teacher, who was also one of the researchers, helped two students design and implement lessons to be used in their class based on literacy ideas from home visits and interviews with students in an after school program. They found that the experiences designed by

the focal students were more meaningful to these two students precisely because of their preparation due to their background knowledge, which was based on literacy experiences outside of school as well (Johnson & Johnson, 2016, p. 116). Also, the data they collected provided new ideas for literacy practices and insight into needed academic content to implement within the classroom. Johnson and Johnson conclude that integrating funds of knowledge is a support for all students. Still, especially marginalized students as teachers try to determine ways to incorporate interests and lived experiences into the curriculum. Therefore, using the funds of knowledge emergent bilinguals share through stories and experiences can support the literacy curriculum by integrating their interests.

Using funds of knowledge to support academic learning is also an essential component of this theory. In Hogg's (2016) research in a New Zealand school, she found funds of knowledge, which she defines as "knowledge and skills arising from life experiences, rather than schooling," to improve achievement and behavior. She found that teachers were "drawing on and drawing out their life experiences" (Hogg, 2016, p. 49) to provide support and examples for their students. This process was similar to other methods used in funds knowledge research, where teachers spent time learning about students' experiences first. In other words, teachers in Hogg's study used the knowledge they gained about their students' lives to not only create a curriculum but to connect to student lives and values to support the curriculum as well. Additionally, one teacher in Hogg's study also allowed students to create lessons for the classroom based on their knowledge, as Johnson & Johnson (2016) did. Hogg notes that using funds of knowledge is a recursive process of learning about individual students and assessing how to design a curriculum that is most useful for them. The design highlighted in this research is one of continually

reevaluating the curriculum. This design is similar to my classroom inquiry by using the stories of my students to analyze and create a literacy curriculum.

There are also examples of using funds of knowledge in English-only areas, where involving the family in literacy practices was a practical way of learning about the interests and literacy practices of students. Early and Flores were able to create a family literacy community in a state with English-only laws in place by holding the program after school, where English-only rules did not apply. Early and a teacher at the elementary charter school where the research takes place designed the curriculum to focus on “stories based on their lived experience and expertise” (Early & Flores, 2017, p. 165), which closely echoes the goals of my research questions. Their goal was to inspire families and students to tell stories and “think about the ways in which they were valued and valuable” (Early & Flores, 2017, p. 165). Early used three methods to code her data: first noting recurring ideas, then noting similarities and differences in the students’ work versus their family’s work, and then coding based on the order of each writing assignment to understand what themes emerged. Through the data, she found parents were invested and interested in their students’ education, and that a multi-literate family community was needed and necessary. Among their findings, the most noteworthy for the study is that this space “honored and privileged” the stories and experiences of participants (Early & Flores, 2017, p.169). My research focuses on the stories of my students to repeal deficit-based ideas surrounding them, in an area where only English is spoken (although not mandated by law), and reveal funds of knowledge. One difference in Early’s research is the revelation of funds of knowledge throughout her students’ writing. Yet, there was no evidence in the article that this was used in any way to build a curriculum based on the study’s findings successfully. I see an

opportunity to use this knowledge to develop new spaces in the curriculum where students can continue to reveal their stories to build or rebuild the curriculum.

These studies solidify why the revelation of funds of knowledge can lead to the creation of a new curriculum and school curriculum that is culturally responsive based on the needs of students due to their lived experiences. Therefore, structuring my classroom through a pedagogy of acompañamiento creates the relationships for students to not only reveal their oppression and experiences, or epistemic privilege as they share stories with a vantage point to speak about on inequalities or or injustice (Moya & Hames-Garcia, 2000), but it can also disclose the funds of knowledge students hold. Using the knowledge gained from students' lived experiences can then be a catalyst for a continuous process of classroom inquiry focused on disclosing students' knowledge and interests to support and learn about each student.

### **Learning about students through culturally responsive teaching**

In my research, the consideration of relationships through a pedagogy of accompaniment (Sepulveda, 2011) to learn about students' funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992) through written work and projects fuel my classroom inquiry. I design curriculum to reveal the knowledges students hold then analyze what students share to create new curriculum and reimagine current projects. The information students share is used to develop literacy curriculum for subsequent lessons through “the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students” (Gay, 2002, p. 106), which is the definition of culturally responsive teaching, shared throughout the stories reveal within their literacy projects. For me, this is a two-step process. First, a teacher must learn about the culture and experiences of students and then

develop a curriculum that uses “explicit knowledge about cultural diversity [which] is imperative to meeting the educational needs of ethnically diverse students” (Gay, 2002, p. 106). Since my classroom contains many different cultures, as well as different needs, there is a constant reinvention of the curriculum to focus on student’s interests or to connect the knowledge they hold to literacy skills. Their writing and projects describe how a situation affects them personally, giving me insight into the supports I can create for my students as well as projects attractive to students following the work of many researchers (Sepulveda, 2011; Moll, 2018; Moll, et al, 1992; Saubich & Esteban-Guitart, 2011, Campano, 2019).

In Geneva Gay’s (2018) book, *Culturally Responsive Teaching*, she argues that all students can do something well and that all students of color and all teachers need to uphold and work toward this belief (p. 39). I based my research on the view that students’ assets and strengths can be revealed and utilized in the classroom. One way that Gay promotes being culturally responsive is through the use of stories, stating “stories educate us about ourselves and others” (Gay, 2018, p. 40). Therefore, in a literacy classroom such as mine, students can connect and tell stories that will bridge gaps in understanding of one another and create new perceptions of one another. Gay uses the research of her own students to show how the stories they told within the classroom allowed her to build supports and curriculum for them. Through these stories, she learned about their culture and found ways to help them be academically successful. She cautions that deficit ways of thinking can cause students to “compromise their ethnic and cultural identity to attain academic achievement.” Still, she argues teachers should focus instead on integrating these identities into the curriculum (Gay, 2018). Diversity in the classroom is a strength. Gay also cites the use of funds of knowledge (Gonzalez et al., 2005) as a condition of

being culturally relevant by first understanding the assets that multicultural students bring to the table. Understanding cultural and ethnic identities revealed through stories that foreground epistemic privilege and funds of knowledge, create new understandings necessary for building a curriculum.

She continues to argue that cultural responsiveness is necessary for all good teaching. Gay (2018) states that the most effective teachers include “prior experiences, community settings, cultural backgrounds and ethnic identities” of all those in the classroom (p. 68). One way she has imagined this inclusive idea is to reimagine the curriculum continuously as needs change based on the students present in the classroom; in other words, there is not a one size fits all approach to good teaching. It is a continuous process of learning about the experiences of each student. The process, deemed culturally responsive pedagogy, follows eight descriptors:

1. Validating - valuing cultural heritage and identities (Gay, 2018)
2. Comprehensive and inclusive - teaching the whole child, following the definitions of Ladson-Billings (1995), building a community of learners (Gay, 2018)
3. Multidimensional - “encompasses curriculum content, learning context, classroom climate, student-teacher relationships, instructional techniques, classroom management, and performance assessments” (Gay, 2018, p.80)
4. Empowering - there is an understanding that students can succeed and teachers push students toward academic success (Gay, 2018)
5. Transformative - students are to be proud of their culture and academic success (Gay, 2018)

6. Emancipatory - it is liberating by removing deficit ideas concerning students of color (Gay, 2018)
7. Humanistic - it “helps students acquire knowledge of self and others” (Gay, 2018, p. 86)
8. Normative and Ethical - those of all cultures and ethnic groups are given the same rights and opportunities in the educational environment (Gay, 2018)

Gay concludes with a recommendation that teachers serve as “cultural organizers” who “understand how culture operates in daily classroom dynamics, create learning atmospheres that radiate cultural and ethnic diversity, and facilitate high academic achievement for all students” (Gay, 2018, p. 94). Therefore, teachers need to learn about their students’ culture first; then, in response to the new knowledge, they create a space and curriculum that values the knowledge and experiences of all students. Encouragement of academic success is also a fundamental idea of creating culturally responsive pedagogy and policies that foreground assets of emergent bilinguals.

By creating classroom literacy projects focused on the pedagogy of accompaniment and funds of knowledge, and analyzing the data from these projects, I can reimagine curriculum and policies that lead to a culturally responsive environment for emergent bilinguals. As Gay argues, both encouragements in academic success and interest in students’ backgrounds and knowledge, specifically funds of knowledge and epistemic privilege, create a caring environment where students can feel safe to express their identities and a place to foster relationships - all components previously discussed in the conceptual framework of this study. Toward the end of the book, Gay (2018) makes a case that “curriculum content is crucial to academic performance” (p. 196). The content we are teaching matters to all students - it must be empowering and

relevant to personal success and culture for the students in the classroom. I believe teachers can create curriculum that is relevant to students through an investigation of their students' experiences and communities to integrate aspects of their lives from diverse and various sources into their curriculum. Even in areas where there is a required curriculum through specific textbooks or sources, there are still opportunities to bring in projects or supplementary texts that incorporate student's backgrounds and life experiences - similar to the context of this project. However, this is a process where teachers continually work to reinvent the curriculum to be inclusive and interesting, based on the stories of students and what they reveal.

A very similar idea, and one of the first scholars to promote culturally responsive pedagogy, was Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995), who began her research by looking at the practices of good teachers working with African American students. Her research focused on figuring out what strategies these teachers, labeled as good teachers by their students and districts, were using within their classrooms. Her results created the theory of culturally responsive pedagogy, which focused on a "pedagogy of opposition...collective, not individual empowerment" (Ladson-Billings, 2004, p. 160). This means that students and teachers are focused on building their own humanizing aspects of education, especially students who are traditionally marginalized. In this pedagogy, there are three tenets: academic success, cultural competence, and critical consciousness (Ladson-Billings, 2004). Each of these tenets is focused on building a partnership between the student and the teacher. According to Ladson-Billings (2004), academic success is built through teachers getting students to believe they can be successful as well as choosing to focus on academics (p. 160.) The second tenet is cultural competence, here the culture of students is used as a channel to create new learning experiences -



it is important to value what students already know and what they can contribute to the curriculum. The third tenet focuses on students creating “a broader sociopolitical consciousness that allows them to critique the cultural norms, values, mores, and institutions that produce and maintain social inequities” (Ladson-Billings, 2004, p. 162). She argues that students can learn from taking social action and engaging in the problems within the community. All of these principles combine to create a classroom focused on cultural relevance. The attainment of cultural relevance by listening to the stories and experiences of students shows an interest and understanding of students and validating their knowledge.

In a meta-analysis of culturally relevant education, Aronson & Laughter (2016) found poor academic performance for EL students when there was “a misalignment among cultural expectations, practices, and home knowledge” (p. 192). However, in the studies where there was a connection between student, culture, and content, the students felt they were successful. Therefore, in my study, students complete journals where they must make explicit connections between their own culture (through experiences and stories) and content. Morrell (2017) states that literacy education is a way to increase intercultural understanding, and the journals are a tool to understand the experiences of my students as we all have different cultural experiences. From my perspective, these journals are a space to connect content to their stories and experiences. Explicit knowledge of one another’s backgrounds also helps to build relationships as we engage with one another, and as I eventually design curriculum focused on what I’ve learned from these students. Souryasack and Lee (2007) also used writing to connect to the background knowledge of their emergent bilinguals. They used a writer’s workshop format, where teachers conference with students individually. The authors reported this immediate feedback through conferences

and connections to their background through writing, which led to “more positive attitudes toward writing” and “increased motivation” to write (Souryasack & Lee, 2007, p. 79). As shown throughout my study, my students will use reflections of text, stories, and experiences to connect their culture and background to the texts studied in our classroom. My students are also more willing to write when they write about their own lives. Reading responses journals as well as literacy projects that compared students’ lives to the books we were reading, as shown in the immigration story unit as well as the artifactual literacy project, reveal knowledges and experiences that are useful to understanding my students.

Some more recent studies have considered using culturally relevant teaching with emergent bilinguals. Such as Nykiel-Herbert (2010), who stresses the importance of utilizing the home culture in the education of refugee students due to the tradition of American schools being culturally relevant for only white middle-class students (p. 3). Her research spanned ten months of studying non-literate Iraqi refugee students and found that learning in an environment based on home culture significantly improved their academic performance. The students in Nykiel-Herbert’s study moved to an immersion program where the content was English only. Yet, they were encouraged to use their home language and home culture for communication to understand new concepts.

Additionally, teachers in the program put a strong focus on building relationships with each student to understand their identities. When the students moved from mainstream classrooms, and pull out sessions of EL curriculum, to a space focused on their literacy skills, they excelled. 6 of the 11 students in the study went from a non-literate test score to “Competent-Literate” the highest level in 12 months (Nykiel-Herbert, 2010, p. 5). Nykiel-Herbert also

stressed how important it was to build a foundation with the students first, to understand the cultural barriers they were experiencing in school, and built relationships through conversations with the students as well as using storytelling projects where students could express their lived experiences. The teachers concluded that not only did test scores raise, but those students began to understand their culture as well as American culture. In this study, using culturally responsive techniques and storytelling made a difference in the students' literacy skills. They were able to learn about one another and create a new curriculum and connections based on the stories shared in a literacy space. My hope for my students is that our stories will foster a new curriculum and new relationships as we share in our emergent bilingual classroom.

In Irizarry's (2007) work with Latino students, his beliefs concerning teaching emergent bilingual students echo my own. He claims, "connecting with students and responding to their cultural identities are at the heart of culturally responsive pedagogy" (p. 21). In his study based on a high school history class, he found culture must be a broad concept to read diverse audiences. Irizarry also found that storytelling, this time from the teacher about his own life, was a way to make a connection with the students concerning the different life experiences each side had lived. Irizarry's students were able to speak in their native language to communicate and help one another understand the concepts.

Similarly, Lee's (2012) research of international schools also found similar results of teachers who were able to help emergent bilinguals succeed. She found teachers regularly asked about "immigration experiences" and drew on "student experiences and cultures" in various content areas (p. 67). Lee's study, like my study, used storytelling as a catalyst to enact culturally relevant pedagogy through sharing the immigration experiences of students to draw on culture. I

also worked to build relationships with students in order to identify barriers and concerns that could be hindering student success throughout this work based on what the stories and experiences of students reveal. I considered these revelations about students' lives to use culture for literacy instruction by incorporating the assets and interests students expressed into our curriculum and classroom community through the incorporation of new literacy projects with a focus on family, tradition, and culture.

All of the literature reviewed in this section and the stories of lived experiences in my classroom over the last two years, lead me to this argument: A pedagogy of accompaniment (Sepulveda, 2011) that foreground students' previous knowledge and background through stories can reveal funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992), through analyzing the student work and reimagining curriculum, these ideas can lead to more culturally responsive teaching practices to build curriculum and policies that focus on the assets of emergent bilinguals. Developing a curriculum on knowledge of students creates an asset-based curriculum to foreground student strengths and interests. A literacy curriculum that focuses on students can establish relationships and spaces of community needed for language learners as they navigate new spaces, languages, and barriers.

### **Chapter 3: Research Design**

#### **Qualitative Research Approach Practitioner Inquiry**

The research design is a practitioner inquiry study as I seek to learn from my students to transform my school's curriculum and policies concerning emergent bilingual students. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009) theorize practitioner inquiry as a theory of action which "positions the role of practitioners and practitioner knowledge as central to the goal of transforming teaching, learning, leading and schooling" (p. 119). My goal as the practitioner is to design a curriculum that reveals the students' knowledge within the classroom to understand their experiences and needs. As the teacher, my focus is on creating relationships first. Then, to combine what I learn from those relationships with the curriculum. I believe this method as a teacher focused on relationships and practitioner analyzing what I learn from those relationships will reveal student knowledge as they share their thoughts and insights throughout our classroom projects. Then to use this data to go "beyond the mere critique of the educational regime and contribute to efforts

to re-envision the work of practitioners in global societies” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009, p. 119).

Consequently, as the researcher, the students’ stories are the impetus to analyze and design supports and curriculum based in a culturally responsive environment. This inquiry will create a curriculum and policies for emergent bilinguals by focusing on my students’ performance, knowledge, and feedback within the classroom. This framework will be possible only after analyzing what students have revealed about their knowledge within the classroom curriculum. This continuous analysis of student work through each year and phase of this project is why this approach is useful as my research design. I am focused on transforming my curriculum, policies, and supports concerning emergent bilinguals, based on the knowledge students share in my classroom.

Since this research focuses on learning from and about emergent bilinguals’ stories in literacy classrooms and building a curriculum that honors those experiences, practitioner inquiry is a practical fit as the research approach in this study. Simon and Campano (2009) define practitioner inquiry as an approach where “teachers generate understandings of literacy from their practice...and its broader societal inequities” (p. 480). Using self-reflexivity and vulnerability that Campano and Simon cite as strengths of practitioner inquiry will allow me to critically assess what is working in my literacy classroom and what is not. Reflective practice will allow the teacher as a researcher to investigate the knowledge produced by students and assess what I am learning from my students and how I can incorporate these knowledges into my curriculum.

Furthermore, as a researcher, practitioner inquiry is “grounded in the problems and contexts of practice in the first place...” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009, p. 123). This research

investigates a problem, emergent bilinguals who are required to complete the same curriculum as mainstream students. My goal is to use what I learn from students to reimagine the required curriculum into a framework that foregrounds the knowledges held by my students. Therefore, it is an inquiry grounded in the issues present in my classroom over the last three years. The conclusion highlights the asset based curriculum and policies, I have imagined through data analysis of my students' work in conjunction with published theories concerning emergent bilinguals. Although they often are using the same required texts as their peers, the projects are created to validate their previous knowledge, I want their learning to foreground the world knowledge they already hold. Therefore, this practitioner research will investigate the strategies used to connect their previous knowledge with our local curriculum within our emergent bilingual classroom, through the inclusion of projects that highlight student knowledge. The investigation will use a pedagogy of *acompañamiento* that foregrounds relationships as a catalyst to display students' previous experience and background. These disclosures of students' family and cultural consciousness to reveal funds of knowledge can lead to an understanding of students' interests and needs to cultivate a culturally appropriate framework for emergent bilingual in a secondary setting.

## **Context of Study**

This research takes place at an urban high school in the Midwest, with approximately 2700 students, and where 87% of students are white (IDOE, 2018). There is a changing demographic as emergent bilingual are enrolling in higher numbers. My part within this practitioner inquiry study is the instructor of English as a New Language course. This study investigates the stories told by two of my students, Nour and Ali, through an immigration story project conducted at the beginning of our class and the subsequent stories they shared throughout

their two years in my classroom. These stories convey knowledge of students concerning their family, culture, and oppression, and taught me about their interests as well as the support they need. As a researcher, I analyzed this data to determine supports and programs our school could design to benefit secondary emergent bilinguals. The two focal students in this study are also part of an emergent bilingual study hall in my classroom, and we communicate daily about their grades, interests, struggles, etc. My focus on these students has always been to build a relationship first, then, based on the things I learn from each student, to create curriculum and school policies that will benefit emergent bilinguals as they navigate secondary graduation requirements.

Within my school, I have freedom to create an English curriculum for emergent bilinguals, as well as the benefit of working closely with many staff members concerning scheduling or discipline issues. Therefore, I must build relationships with these students to learn about the structures and curriculum they need to be successful. Building relationships through a pedagogy of *acompañamiento* comes first, and foregrounds funds of knowledge to reveal the student's lived experiences. Listening to what students disclose can allow me to build a curriculum and secondary framework that is culturally relevant and interesting.

## **Data Sources**

As a teacher, coordinator, and practitioner researcher in this study and English as a new language classroom, I spent many hours listening to my students' stories. The two students in this study, Nour and Ali, are both learning to speak English in a predominantly white, English-speaking school. The main question that guided this practitioner inquiry was:

What am I learning from these students?



With the follow-up question:

How do I use this knowledge to develop culturally relevant pedagogy?

***Data collected in phase one/year one of the study***

- Two immigration stories - one story Nour created about her father; one story Dominique created about Nour's journey - Collected in September of year one
  - Reflection of immigration stories and of the movie *Coco*- eight students wrote one paragraph of observation for each peer's story (sixteen total). Nour also wrote a reflection of their process of creating and presenting a story - Collected in September of year one.
  - Student interviews - one interview conducted with Nour in March of year two.

***Immigration Stories:***

This unit was designed as a welcoming unit for my emergent bilinguals, inviting them to develop immigration stories about others' lives. They created artifacts that they could share, not only with each other but also with the other students at school and with their families around the world. These projects and reflections reveal aspects of culture and knowledge the students already hold to build relationships, inform my teaching, inform my role as ELL coordinator, and create opportunities to use culturally responsive teaching by establishing what I learn from these projects. The focal students of this study, Nour and Ali, created an immigration story based on a family member in their household. Nour's story revealed additional information about her journey, and a peer created an account based on her life. Ali created an initial story about her mother. Then in year two, Ali created a supplemental immigration story about her father, so her work focused on both of her parents. These stories form the basis of my argument: that student stories, designed through culturally responsive and *acompañamiento* pedagogies, can reveal the

funds of knowledge students hold. This information can create a subsequent curriculum that foregrounds the lived experiences of students. The secondary data sources below were all created as projects following the presentations of these immigration stories, phase two of the study, based on what I learned from students about their experiences, interests, and families.

In this phase, I designed all the curriculum and taught the course. My focus as the teacher was language and literacy skills gained through creating a story and presenting it. After the completion of the projects, I looked at the final products as a researcher to see what knowledges and experiences students shared. This information is analyzed to create new projects and policies for secondary emergent bilinguals.

### ***Data collected in phase two of study***

The table below describes the data collected in phase two of the study and the date the materials were collected.

**Table 1 Data collected in Phase 2.**

Data collected	Date
Immigration story about Maria (Ali's mother)	September year 1
Immigration story about Leon (Ali's father)	September year 2
Peer reflections of both stories and of the movie <i>Coco</i>	September year 1 and 2
Writing prompts	Throughout year 1
Artifactual Literacy Project	Year 2
Memoir	Year 2

- Two immigration stories - one story Ali created about her father and one about her mother - Collected in September of year one (a story about her mother) and September of year two (a story about her father).

- Reflection of immigration stories - six students wrote one paragraph of what they learned from each peer's story (twelve total). Ali also wrote a reflection of their process of creating and presenting a story - Collected in September of year one (reflections about her mother's story) and September of year two (reflections about her father's story).
- Journal entries - one written paragraph per class day, approximately 85 entries for each student - Collected throughout the school year in year one and two.
  - Students write a paragraph daily in class. They start from prompts that pose questions about the students' culture, interests, family, and traditions, etc. These daily writings are collected biweekly throughout the semester and contain students' everyday social experiences (Sepulveda, 2011). For the prompts that focus on family, there may be funds of knowledge indicators. Students also have the option to not focus on the prompt I've given and write about whatever they want to write – this creates a space for students to say what is on their mind or to tell me issues they are having. Students usually write about the given prompt, but a few students have taken the opportunity to write about topics of concern. The written answers students produce from these prompts will be coded for the indicators below and used to make instructional decisions for the next semester as culturally relevant teaching dictates.

I created the following projects in response to the first year of working with these students:

- Artifactual Literacy Project where Ali chose to focus on her Godmother - completed in the November year two

- This project focused on an artifact from student lives related to a required text. They presented these projects to the class, and their peers wrote a reflection of what they learned from each project. Students have conversations about the artifacts after their presentation to learn from and about one another. This project revealed more stories about the items students find essential and disclose aspects of their home or previous experiences.
- Memoir focused on Ali's family- completed in December of year two
  - For the semester exam writing task in year two, students created a memoir based on their families and funds of knowledge. These memoirs incorporate all aspects of my conceptual framework: culture, relationships, family, experience, etc. I began by providing students with a funds of knowledge graphic organizer (Appendix A; Park & Lit, 2015). The students chose at least two of the tenets described in the organizer to explain how this connects to their memories of their families. They described how they see this knowledge in their everyday social experiences. Each student produced two essays in December of the school year. These memoirs could reveal funds of knowledge held by my students. In a study by Handsfield and Valente (2016), they used a memoir to explain epistemic privilege and funds of knowledge of their students, so I have incorporated this memoir into my study to reveal the same tenets. Since this was such a short writing task of only a few paragraphs, the data collected from the memoir served to back up my interpretations of what Ali said about her family through previously collected data from August - November.

In this phase, I designed all curriculum based on what I learned as a researcher. For the second year of the project, my instructional focus as the teacher did not change. During the projects, I was concerned with language and literacy skills gained through creating and presenting stories based on life experiences. After the completion of the projects, I looked at the final products as a researcher to see what knowledges and experiences students shared. This information is analyzed to create new projects and policies for secondary emergent bilinguals.

### ***Thematic Analysis***

I analyzed data through themes present in my conceptual framework. The first coding of data focused on discerning the codes below in immigration stories, and then in other collected student documents that were part of the literacy curriculum:

Funds of knowledge codes:

These codes center on locating funds of knowledge in my students' work. The codes will first serve to answer my major research question: What am I learning from these students?

Through this evidence, I will be able to imagine new ways to build on the information I've learned about the lives of my students and how to integrate their knowledge into my curriculum and into school policies that affect secondary emergent bilinguals.

Table two details the codes I generated from definitions of funds of knowledge. Each code then has an example from students' work and an explanation of my interpretations of how each example fits each code. Additionally, I included instances where the student's work would not demonstrate funds of knowledge.

**Table 2 Funds of Knowledge Codes and Examples.**

Funds of knowledge	Examples from data	Explanation of how	Examples that are not
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codes		data defines code	FOK
Life experiences (Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, 2005)	My sister had “two kids sitting beside here crying for help but no one seems to help them because they are afraid to get caught. But she ran as quick as she can to help those kids but sadly she get caught by two army men and they beat her. And she never saw those kids again.”	This life experience was used to begin the immigration story and show the audience the horrors faced on the journey. She went on to explain how this experience shaped her life.	Life experiences that are not important to the student as a catalyst or event that caused changes in their life or family’s life (or these changes are not explained by the student) will not be used.
Family (Gonzalez, et al., 2005)	“Q: How did you feel when you first arrived to the United State? A: She was happy but the same time she is not fully happy because she has no family and she doesn’t have someone to rely on”	This example explains the role that family has within the student’s life.	Mentioned family members or family activities that do not describe the importance of family will not be used.
Community (Gonzalez, et al., 2005)	“That life has many stories and people have a lot and different stories to say. Once you understand her/his story you’ll learn more about the person.”	This example explains how the student became part of a community by learning about others and their stories.	Community is shown in the ways students connect with others through learning from their stories, not just through friends or acquaintances they have.
Culture (Gonzalez, et al., 2005)	“I want them to learn about my culture and how old my cloth is. And how hard was it to make and it is very precious to me. And I want them to learn how this cloth help me remember things.”	This example explains the importance of an item to the culture of the student. He is explaining why it is important that others learn about his culture.	Culture is shown through the lessons students teach about their own heritage. It is present in what they deem as necessary to tell the class. It is not what I assume about students based on their country or

			origin.
Household knowledge (trade, business, finance) (Moll et al, 1992)	For the artifactual literacy project a student gave a description of how his grandmother made cloth. Then described how the cloth was used for weddings and Chin National Day.	This example explains a trade that belongs to this family and why it is useful.	Household knowledge should describe a skill or special knowledge about a subject that was learned from a family member. It is not knowledge learned through our school.
Learning motivated by the child's interests (Moll, et al.,1992)	"Nour tried hard to learn English. I think she was brave because she didn't want to learn English but she wanted to communicate with others."	This example shows Nour's interest in learning to communicate. She decided to learn a language due to her needs and interests.	Learning due to requirements of school or other entities is not motivated by a child's interests.

#### Culturally Responsive Teaching codes:

These codes help answer the second research question: How do I use this knowledge to create a culturally relevant pedagogy? This data will aid in rebuilding a classroom curriculum and school policies focused on the needs and interests of secondary emergent bilinguals. When considering students' work and the curriculum inspired by their work, these codes validate and question whether the space or curriculum is culturally responsive, as well as use these codes to imagine ways that I can be more culturally responsive if these areas are missing from my findings.

- Self-realizations (Gay, 2018)
- Cultural knowledge (Gay, 2018)
- Prior experiences (Gay, 2018)

Table 3 describes the sources I used to answer the research questions throughout my study.

**Table 3 Research Questions and Sources.**

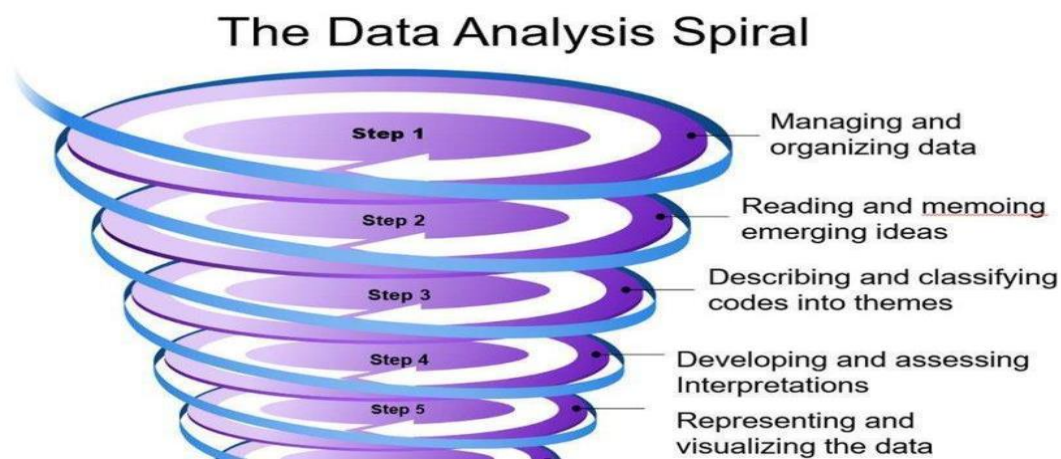
Research Questions and sources	Projects that may yield answers to questions:
What am I learning from these students?	<p>Projects that could lead to discussions of lived experiences:</p> <p><b>Immigration Story</b> - 4 stories over two years; collected in September year one and two</p> <p><b>Writing Prompts</b> - one year of prompts for each student collected through the year one and two</p> <p><b>Memoirs</b> - collected in the fall semester of year two</p> <p><b>Artifactual Literacy Project</b> - collected in the fall semester of year two</p> <p><b>Participant interview</b> - during the second school year</p>
How do I use this knowledge to develop culturally relevant pedagogy?	<p>Projects that could lead to these revelations:</p> <p>Immigration story</p> <p>Artifactual Literacy project</p> <p>Participant interviews</p> <p>Memoir</p>

### **Strategies for validating findings**

My plan for coding was to use the data analysis spiral from Creswell and Poth (2018, p. 181) shown below. I managed and organized the data in step one by utilizing Excel spreadsheets for each student, using a different worksheet for their immigration stories, reflections based on their story, and subsequent projects. While coding, I took notes as I read through the student work, noting anything I deemed essential, as well as making notes to focus on the ideas I wanted to come back to after the initial coding. After coding all generated data, for step two I created new spreadsheets that focused on the specific data generated for each code as the first coded



sheets were separated by each project. There were separate spreadsheets for each theory of my conceptual framework: funds of knowledge, acompañamiento, and culturally responsive teaching. These sheets helped to determine which codes were frequent and accurate or inaccurate to recode. Additionally, based on the frequency of codes, I created memos about emerging ideas. I then developed themes or dimensions using step three of the data analysis spiral (pictured below) from the codes used frequently or codes that contained the same phrases or definitions (Cresswell & Poth, 2018, p. 186). This was a recursive process as I coded and recoded through steps of the spiral and phase of the project.



After reducing the codes into themes, I created a visualization chart of the data that shows: Initial codes, expanded codes, final codes, and created themes. This chart will show the progression of how I went from the initial codes listed above to creating overarching themes of my research.

### ***Data Analysis – phase one.***

To code the data, I used the predetermined codes based on the theories of a pedagogy of acompañamiento and funds of knowledge. The last two codes concerning epistemic privilege

were also added as I began to notice the students talk about oppression due to their experiences. These codes inform the culturally responsive pedagogy I will create. The ones below were found frequently throughout my data. These responses and codes are concerning virtual and actual others encountered throughout the unit. Table 1 shows the codes, definitions of the codes, and an example from the data collection.

Table 4 describes the themes I chose based on the theories used in my conceptual framework. Next, each code is defined and there is an example of this code shown in students' work.

**Table 4 Codes and Definitions.**

Code name	Definition	Example
Alternative spaces on school grounds (acompañamiento)	The ENL class provided a space for understanding difficult social practices such as speaking	"I had difficulties speaking and understanding English. But because of the ENL class I started to understand better."

Life experiences  (funds of knowledge)	Sharing experiences	“Immigration is not an easy thing, it is difficult.”
Culture of belonging  (acompañamiento)	They are reaffirming that the experiences shared are essential to all of us.	“I learned that even though you missed your country you are safe and that’s the most important.”
Family  (funds of knowledge)	Protection and love from those considered family is important	“I learned that family will always be with you, even in the hard times.”
A vantage point to talk about oppression  (epistemic privilege)	Seeing the oppression of others leads to new understandings	“I learned that immigrant has [have] to be treated like other people. People can’t be racist.”
Experience of injustice or inequity  (epistemic privilege)	Examples of lives changed due to lack of equality	“Sui had been living in sadness. Sui’s country is ruled by a government.”

Next, I organized the codes most evident from the chart above, due to the number of times they occurred, into themes using thematic analysis following Cresswell & Poth (2018). The three tables below detail the data analysis spiral process created from Cresswell & Poth's (2018) examples. The bottom of each table starts with the predetermined codes. After one coding of the material, I analyzed these codes to create expanded codes that detailed my interpretations of students' work. Next, I began to look at the expanded codes and student's work for patterns, which created the final code category. Finally, the theme was created after looking at each code in conjunction with the student's work to determine my interpretation of the subjects within each immigration story.

**Table 5 Theme - Recognition of a Need for Brave Spaces for Immigrants.**

Theme Described <i>Recognition of a need for brave spaces for immigrants</i>					
Final Code Categorized <i>Recognition of immigration's hardships</i>			Final Code Categorized <i>Recognition of safety as a cause for immigration</i>		
Expanded Codes Applied <i>Learning through community</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>Barriers due to language</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>Challenging to be somewhere new</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>Not always chosen by migrant</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>Unsafe environments separate family and friends</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>Important to feel safe</i>

Initial Codes Named <i>Alternate spaces</i>	Initial Codes Named <i>Experience of injustice or inequity</i>	Initial Codes Named <i>Vantage points to talk about oppression</i>
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**Table 6 Theme - Recognition of family and community as an essential aspect of life.**

Theme Described <i>Recognition of family and community as an essential aspect of life</i>					
Final Code Categorized <i>Recognition of family's importance</i>			Final Code Categorized <i>Recognition that belonging to a community is important</i>		
Expanded Codes Applied <i>Family's importance</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>Need for family</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>Leaving family behind for safety</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>Creating new relationships</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>Only sadness at the beginning</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>Everything works out in the end</i>
Initial Codes Named <i>Family</i>		Initial Codes Named <i>Life experiences</i>		Initial Codes Named <i>Culture of belonging</i>	

**Table 7 Theme - Recognition of How Immigration Shapes Students' Lives.**

Theme Described <i>Recognition of how immigration shapes students' lives</i>					
Final Code Categorized <i>Recognition of past experiences</i>			Final Code Categorized <i>Recognition of new life and experiences in the United States</i>		
Expanded Codes Applied <i>Painful memories</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>Strength Through perseverance</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>Multiple Perspectives</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>American Dream</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>Social circles</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>Years since immigrating</i>

Initial Codes Named <i>Life experiences</i>	Initial Codes Named <i>Vantage points to talk about oppression</i>	Initial Codes Named <i>Culture of Belonging</i>
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I found that these immigration stories and subsequent reflections elicited responses in line with these themes, community, family and life changes, after two reviews of the collected data: first on the initial coding and then when recording to look for frequency and patterns to then organize the data into codes. Reflections of the movie and immigration story varied across several students who focused on these themes. However, the specific immigration stories that elicited these themes in the first year of the project were Nour's story about her father's journey and Dominique's story focused on the same trip, but from the perspective of Nour. Both of these stories offered insight into Nour's journey.

### ***Data Analysis - phase two.***

To code the data, I used the same predetermined codes used in phase one of this project based on the theories of a pedagogy of acompañamiento and funds of knowledge available in table 4.

The three tables below detail the data analysis spiral process created from Cresswell & Poth's (2018) examples. The bottom of each table starts with the predetermined codes. After one coding of the material, I analyzed these codes to create expanded codes that detailed my interpretations of students' work. Next, I began to look at the expanded codes and student's work for patterns, which created the final code category. Finally, the theme was created after looking at each code

in conjunction with the student's work to determine my interpretation of the subjects within each immigration story.

Then, I checked the codes found in phase two with the themes created in phase one. The changes are minimal and highlighted in the table 8 below. Many of these changes were due to the participant in phase two, Ali, focusing on her family's immigration journey and not her own as she was born to immigrant parents shortly after they arrived in the United States. Again due to the evidence found in the code chart above (table 3), and due to the number of times they occurred, I organized the code into themes using thematic analysis following Cresswell & Poth (2018).

In table 8, these expanded codes and final codes changed due to various explanations given by Ali's parents about their immigration journey, and the recognition of the hardships faced by migrants and their families. These expanded codes and final codes shifted according to the narrative of her parents. They gave several variations to explain aspects of their journey to the United States to Ali, someone who had not undertaken this journey. The codes required more adaptation in light of the hardships faced not only by migrants but also hardships extended to family members due to minority status after arriving in the U.S. For example, the importance of learning was stressed as both parents mentioned they could not finish their education in their home country. These experiences throughout the two immigration stories also affect Ali as she said her parents still struggle with language and speak mostly Spanish at home. Additionally, the codes changed due to the opportunities Ali's parents spoke of as a reason for the sadness of leaving family and undertaking journeys.



***Table 8 Theme - Recognition of a Need for Brave Spaces for Migrant Families.\****

(\*highlights denote changes made between phase one table 5 and phase two table 8)

Theme Described	
<i>Recognition of a need for brave spaces for Migrant Families.</i>	
<p>Final Code Categorized</p> <p><i>Recognition of hardships faced by migrants and families</i></p>	<p>Final Code Categorized</p> <p><i>Recognition of opportunity as a cause for immigration</i></p>

Expanded Codes Applied <i>Stereotypes due to language</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>Barriers due to language</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>Barriers due to race</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>Importance of learning</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>Immigration separates family and friends</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>Hard journeys</i>
Initial Codes Named <i>Alternate spaces</i>		Initial Codes Named <i>Experience of injustice or inequity</i>		Initial Codes Named <i>Vantage points to talk about oppression</i>	

The next two tables remained similar between phase one and two of the projects as Ali stressed the importance of family and having a community of those who love and care for one another. Ali showed this through her project focused on the community her family had built within the neighborhood, and the community demonstrated with her classmates as they discussed one another's projects.

However, table 9 changed from how immigration shapes students' lives to a theme that focused on culture and community traditions. Again, Ali is not an immigrant, so her projects did not detail how an immigration journey would shape her life. She is a descendant of immigrants, so her focus was on the ways her immigrant parents tried to preserve traditions and culture. These themes prevailed in her artifactual literacy story and explained how cultural experiences, and the need to keep them as part of the family, shaped her life.

***Table 9 Theme - Recognition of family and community as an essential aspect in life.***

Theme Described	
<i>Recognition of family and community as an essential aspect in life</i>	
Final Code Categorized	Final Code Categorized
<i>Recognition of family's importance</i>	<i>Recognition that belonging to a community is important</i>

Expanded Codes Applied <i>Family's importance</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>Need for family</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>Leaving family behind for safety</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>Creating new relationships</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>Only sadness at the beginning</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>Everything works out in the end</i>
Initial Codes Named <i>Family</i>		Initial Codes Named <i>Life experiences</i>		Initial Codes Named <i>Culture of belonging</i>	

***Table 10 Theme - Recognition of How Culture and Experiences Shape Students' Lives.***

Theme Described  <i>Recognition of how culture and experiences shape students' lives</i>	
Final Code Categorized  <i>Recognition of religion as student's experiences</i>	Final Code Categorized  <i>Recognition of community upholding cultural values</i>

Expanded Codes Applied <i>Motivation to learn about culture</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>Rite of passage</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>Gifts as Reminders of faith</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>Catholicism</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>Friends As Family</i>	Expanded Codes Applied <i>Church community</i>
Initial Codes Named <i>Life experiences</i>		Initial Codes Named <i>Culture</i>		Initial Codes Named <i>Community</i>	

These projects and subsequent reflections elicited responses in line with these themes, community, family, culture, and life experiences. The themes were evident after two reviews of the collected data. First on the initial coding, and then when recoding to look for frequency and patterns. These two reviews revealed patterns which allowed me to organize the data into codes. The immigration stories created new themes due to Ali being a descendant of immigrants. However, the themes of community, family, and brave spaces were still evident in her parents' stories and reflections. The artifactual literacy project and reflections also revealed family, culture, and community themes, following the funds of knowledge and acompañamiento codes.

## **Strategies for member checking**

Finally, I followed Grbich's (2013) questions, cited by Creswell and Poth (2018), to guide the development of my interpretations. He states, "What surprising information did you not expect to find? What information is conceptually interesting or unusual to participants and audiences? What are the dominant interpretations and what are the alternate notions? (cited in Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 195). I assessed my explanations by asking a peer to review the visualizations of patterns and data categories and how they answered or did not answer each research question. By using member checking, I will see where phrases or words may need to be changed or clarified or understand how some of my interpretations can be revised in order to fit the initial codes or code definitions. Then, I assessed what is missing and determined the reasons why these codes were missing to plan my final steps in enacting a culturally responsive classroom and framework for secondary emergent bilinguals.

## **Structure of the Study Chapter**

Both of the chapters start with a description of an event or day within my classroom to give the audience an idea of what is happening at the time and place when this study took place (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 246). Each chapter follows the outline below.

- Vignette of classroom activity - A short story that details a moment in my classroom where I realized listening to the stories of my students was necessary due to their fears or concerns.
- Issue and purpose of this practitioner inquiry study
- Curriculum Unit
- Introduction to focal student

- Description of the immigration curriculum, story and data gathered
  - Important points of discussion found in the data - what I learned about students and how that connects my theoretical overview.
  - Description of subsequent projects that revealed important information about the focal students will be incorporated into the findings to solidify data.
    - Important points of discussion found in this data - what I learned about students and how that connects my theoretical overview.
  - Description of other students' written reflections to the story
- Description of subsequent project or interview revealing funds of knowledge through a students' story and data gathered
- Implications for my classroom community
  - An answer to how these issues work with or against my conceptual framework.
  - Attempt to answer my research questions.
  - Also answering the question - are these methods and this curriculum working with my students?
- An explanation of my conclusions given from the evidence of students through their immigration stories and subsequent projects.

## **Ethical Considerations**

This research is being conducted with a group of students who are already vulnerable to anxiety within mainstream classrooms. Therefore, identification of the participants will not be by their real names or school affiliation by the researcher. As an additional precaution, any names in

their stories will be pseudonyms, and any identifying information such as age, gender, ethnicity, will be considered for removal through conversations with the students and researcher. For example, if there is only one student with a particular ethnicity within the school system, this identifying information will be deleted. Their work will be shared in small portions by the researcher only. To support the students, I will ask that they report any information that is causing risk or harm while participating in this study. My presence as the teacher and the ELL coordinator, someone who plays a big role in the school life of the students in this study, may affect the responses of the students. Additionally, due to the students' knowledge of the research I'm conducting, their responses may also be affected.

#### **Chapter 4: Nour's call for community - Phase one/year one of study**

##### **Importance of Listening - a vignette**

During an English tutoring session one afternoon, a new student I had been working with during study hall sat down. The seemed utterly defeated. When I asked where the school issued computer was, a regular part of our tutoring routine, Finley became teary-eyed. I was confused by this behavior and asked, rather gruffly in hindsight, if the computer was lost. That is when the tattered computer came out of the student's bag. Finley explained his family had been in a car accident the day before. The backpack, which contained the school-issued equipment, was against the car door that was severely damaged by another car. After several minutes of questions, I found out they did not have a police report. The family was afraid to give the computer to the school or talk to the technology department because they did not call the police due to their immigration status. Finley stated, "We can't pay for it, and we can't prove it wasn't



our fault...” These words stopped me. Did my student think we would not help get the materials needed to complete schoolwork due to immigration status? What type of hospitality (or lack of hospitality) were we showing at school to marginalized students? This story is one example of why it is essential to listen to the stories of our immigrant students and understand what they can reveal. What conditions are we creating in our classroom that foster a sense of fear or a sense of belonging?

### **Issue and Purpose of Practitioner Inquiry Study**

My commitment to storytelling issues from a deep feeling that students should share their funds of knowledge and listen to the understanding of others as they share their cultures and areas of expertise. We worked on this project in phase one of this research in August - September 2018 in my English as a new language classroom. The task was for students to create immigration stories based on someone in the community, but Nour chose to focus on her father’s story. Meanwhile, Dominique, another student in the class, decided to tell Nour’s immigration story to the class. Both of the stories in this chapter focus on Nour, one is from the student’s perspective and the other is the father’s perspective. I choose Nour’s stories due to the impact they had on those within my classroom. This impact was shown through silence after these stories were told and through written reflections of peers. Consequently, Nour’s stories were also chosen due to sharing two stories about this journey with our class. When I began coding student reflections of the stories, the feedback for Nour and Dominique’s presentations was astounding. They contained paragraphs written by peers and adults, explaining the lessons learned from both accounts.

Through the process of inviting students to tell their stories, I hoped to learn about students’ strengths and gifts as well as about their experiences as marginalized young adults. I

hoped they would share the knowledge they gained. I was not expecting to also learn of the injustices experienced, what Moya calls epistemic privilege. Moya and Hames-Garcia (2000) define epistemic privilege as “a special advantage with respect to possessing or acquiring knowledge about how fundamental aspects of our society operate to sustain matrices of power” (p. 80-81). Nour’s story detailed the inability to choose to stay in their home country due to war, which demonstrated student knowledge of displacement due to factors out of their control. It was mentioned several times that the family had to follow the parents’ advice, as they were worried about safety at home. Moreover, Nour was willing to talk about lived experiences of oppression as a refugee from a war-torn country. Nour described these ideas, stating. “If I had the chance to go back, I would without any regret because all I did here when I moved was start EVERYTHING from zero, which is very hurtful and difficult. What I learned about this (moving) is that sometimes we can't always have what we want in life, because we don't have a choice.” Nour’s words demonstrate that those oppressed can hold epistemic privilege, meaning that their lived experiences afford a superior vantage point to talk about oppression. I wanted to understand how these experiences affected issues of language, race, and culture they encountered daily within our school and classroom spaces. Handsfield and Valente (2016) found students could develop competencies as “cultural and linguistic brokers” (p. 15) by listening and sharing their struggles and stories in a classroom space. I also hoped to learn from these stories of epistemic privilege as students established “their ability to draw on their own life experiences to understand and name those of others” (Handsfield & Valente, 2016, p.15). The curriculum unit that led up to the telling of these stories is below.

## Curriculum Unit

This unit uses a project-based learning approach. Immigration is the focus of the unit, and students listened to immigration podcasts, read immigration stories, and watched examples of immigration stories while reflecting on their approach to the culminating project. The culminating project for this study was for students to create an immigration story by interviewing an immigrant from our community. Students shared stories in class. We held a viewing party where other teachers, aides, and principals came to watch the immigration stories and provide written feedback for each student.

The unit followed this format:

The graphic is a checklist titled "Immigration Story Checklist" with a red checkmark icon. It is set against a dark blue background with a white border. The checklist items are organized into a series of boxes, some of which are nested. The items are: Listen to "The Immigrant" podcast, NPR's Embedded; Complete listening comprehension questions and reflective writing prompts; Watch Disney's Coco; Complete listening comprehension questions and reflective writing prompts; Passenger Search on libertyellisfoundation.org, listen to stories, discuss findings; Find and view You Tube Videos titled My Immigration Story, discuss videos; Creating the Story; Review Moth Radio Hour's Storytelling Tips; Write and practice interview questions; Interview your source; With the technology coach, create a presentation of pictures, slides, etc.; Record your story and peer edit; and Revise then present story to the class.

Immigration Story Checklist	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Listen to "The Immigrant" podcast, NPR's Embedded
<input type="checkbox"/>	Complete listening comprehension questions and reflective writing prompts
<input type="checkbox"/>	Watch Disney's Coco
<input type="checkbox"/>	Complete listening comprehension questions and reflective writing prompts
<input type="checkbox"/>	Passenger Search on libertyellisfoundation.org, listen to stories, discuss findings
<input type="checkbox"/>	Find and view You Tube Videos titled My Immigration Story, discuss videos
<input type="checkbox"/>	Creating the Story
<input type="checkbox"/>	Review Moth Radio Hour's Storytelling Tips
<input type="checkbox"/>	Write and practice interview questions
<input type="checkbox"/>	Interview your source
<input type="checkbox"/>	With the technology coach, create a presentation of pictures, slides, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Record your story and peer edit
<input type="checkbox"/>	Revise then present story to the class

One of the main components of this unit with emergent bilinguals was for students to reflect on what they learned from the experiences and knowledge of virtual and actual others throughout viewing and creating immigration stories. The reflections focused on virtual others such as podcast characters, immigrants from Ellis Island who have published their stories, and Miguel, a Disney character from the movie *Coco*. We began listening to “The Immigrant” podcast. Students completed listening questions, and then we discussed the story. After the completing each assignment, including the first podcast, students were asked a series of questions, all variations of the questions below:

- What did you learn from others (virtual or actual)?
- How does this story relate to immigration? What does it reveal about migration?
- What can you teach others about your journey?

We followed this same pattern throughout the unit. Next, we watched *Coco* and completed listening questions. Then we held a discussion and created journal entries based on the same series of questions. Again, we followed this pattern after listening to the oral stories on The Ellis Island website and the immigration stories found on YouTube.

For the next section of the unit, we wrote interview questions after looking up many examples on the internet. After completing thirty interview questions we could use to create a story about someone’s journey, we practiced interviewing one another. Finally, students interviewed and recorded their immigrant subjects. The day after interviews of subjects, the technology coach visited our classroom and helped students create and record stories on their iPads. The coach visited several days to help students create their final product. As we worked on the final presentation, I helped students proofread and edit, and they sought advice from their

peers. This was a project-based learning unit, so each student worked at a different pace when creating the story. At the end of the project, we held a viewing party and invited administrators, teachers, and aides to view our stories.

I collected data from the listening questions and reflections students turned in as a response and practice reflection to the podcast, movie *Coco*, YouTube videos, and Ellis Island assignment. Additionally, I gathered data from the immigration story viewing party through the observations of each story written by all members those in the classroom during the viewing party and the immigration stories themselves.

### **Research questions:**

The main research question:

1. What am I learning from these students?

A subsequent question followed:

2. How do I use this knowledge to develop culturally relevant pedagogy?

### **Introduction to Focal Student**

Nour was a sophomore in high school when she created this immigration story. She is currently a senior and still part of my classes both as a student of English and a teacher aide. She has had bullying issues throughout her time in our school due to her religious affiliation. Her parents are very involved in her schooling. Nour's family has been in the United States for seven years and immigrated due to safety concerns in the Middle East. Nour is a hard worker but very self-conscious of what her peers will say or how her grades will affect her chances to move out of the ENL program. As she has matured and gained language skills, she has realized that she has a gift for languages and has decided to study Turkish online. She is currently at a level 4 on

the WIDA Access testing scale for English proficiency and a 4 out of 5 in Turkish proficiency through her online school. She is very conscientious about her grades, and many of her teachers say lovely things about her work ethic. Nour works consistently and quietly, always striving to do her best and learn new things.

Other students in this study who reflected on Nour's story are Dominique and Mimi. Dominique is highlighted as the author of the immigration story focused on Nour's journey. He speaks two languages fluently and has been enrolled in immersion schools throughout his life, until attending our high school. Dominique is highly involved in choir and dance, spending many of his days after school working with the varsity choir and choreographing dances for students in other choirs. Dominique and Nour are good friends and spend quite a bit of their time together.

Another friend of Nour's in the class is Mimi; she is a female, sophomore student who has lived in several different countries due to her father's job as a computer engineer. Mimi is multilingual, and plans to enroll in high school in her home country for the last two years of high school. She is nervous about returning due to her language skills in her native language, even though she has been in three countries and learned to speak three new languages for the last eight years. She is included in this study due to her reflections concerning Nour's journey.

## **Results of Research**

### ***Reflections on the movie Coco***

Upon first reading the data, it was evident that students were sharing their own experiences and connecting those to the stories of one another and virtual others, as they did in the movie, *Coco*. Students were also relating their families and stories to Miguel, the virtual main character, and displaying "emphatic fusion, a deep sense of empathy of relating to another person

as a whole human being” (Sepulveda, 2011, p. 559) a tenet of *acompañamiento*. Therefore, they were enacting a form of accompaniment as well as sharing their epistemic privilege, as revealed in the next section, as they considered their feelings of empathy for others within our classroom.

### **Recognition of community as an essential aspect in our lives.**

One place where student’s empathy was reflective of the sadness they felt in the movie, *Coco*, was for Miguel and his grandfather to not be able to return to their family in the land of the living. Nour connected her feelings concerning Miguel’s plight to the experiences and feelings toward her own family. She equated the character’s journey in the movie with her immigration journey. She also connected her immigration journey to her family, stating, “It is very sad leaving everything behind you, upsetting the people who love[s] you. But, if moving to another place only does good for you and your family, there’s no other choice...Family comes first with love and support.” This powerful quote gives Nour a chance to share oppression from her own vantage point (Moya & Hames-Garcia, 2000). Her oppression caused her to move away from family due to what they deemed as “no other choice” than to leave those they loved.

Additionally, she also shows empathy and understanding for the character’s actions based on the choices they faced. Nour is reflecting on her journey and hinting at the reasons why they left, to do “good for her family.” Nour also reveals that focusing on family and the loss of family as an essential aspect in her life through her assertion that “family comes first.” She also connected her own life experiences with the journey of virtual/fictional others and reiterated how important those in her family, or community, are to her. Family is an essential aspect of her life.

An essential community is a valuable lesson to me when considering what the lived experiences of my students can reveal. Nour revealed that family was the most crucial aspect of her life, by stating, “family comes first.” Therefore, my literacy curriculum should include places

where family is involved, either in classroom activities or by inviting students to talk about their families. Many students, like Nour, are away from their families, creating the need for a community within our classroom. We need to create a community, as Nour stated, “with love and support,” and listen to stories or experiences to encourage one another through reflections of what is essential to us.

### **Immigration Stories**

After reading and watching several different types of immigration stories, and sharing their reflections, students created their own stories. After consulting with the technology coach in our district, we decided to use Google slides to format the words and pictures of the immigration stories and record voice-overs using either iMovie or the video app on the student issued iPads. I asked students to interview someone in the community, and I came prepared with a list of volunteers. To my surprise, due to the turmoil surrounding immigration politically, the students ignored the list of volunteers I had provided and used their own stories and family members as subjects for the immigration stories.

### ***Recognition of a need for brave spaces for immigrants***

Nour interviewed her father for her immigration story. She began by letting him know that if any questions she asked were too personal that he did not need to answer them, Nour provided a proverbial safety net for him by supplying a way out of answering the questions she posed. The beginning conversation gave me pause. There may be things that the two, father and daughter, would discuss that may not be something they planned to share with our entire community. By being aware that this may happen throughout the interview, she provided a brave space for both herself and her father, Al. An immigration story is a brave space where “courage”



(Arao & Clemens, 2013, p. 141), and understanding may be necessary when sharing sensitive information with new audiences.

Nour's father, Al, began by stating how happy he was to be the one Nour chose to interview, ignoring the comments she had made about not having to answer questions that were hard for him. They chatted about one another's day and how happy Al was to be a part of this school assignment. This exchange served to let the audience know how close the two were as they spoke about work and school, and the story continued by documenting the journey of Al, who was "55 years old" when he decided to move from his home. Al stated, "We moved here because of safety reasons." As I reflected on safety as a significant concern for Nour's family, I realized safety shows the oppression experienced through their epistemic privilege but could also explain why she was reluctant to participate in school activities with peers or teachers she didn't know. A need to feel safe and keep her family safe due to the injustices they have experienced could be the reason she provided a way out of interview questions for her father at the beginning of the interview. Throughout my years teaching her, I knew for Nour to feel safe she wanted to know who was involved in the activity – whether it was tutoring or reading aloud in class. I wondered if these feelings and fears came from the need to protect herself. Could these feelings stem from issues of safety, her epistemic privilege as a refugee and former citizen of a country at war, that her dad also detailed in his interview as moving due to "safety reasons?" Learning about the concerns of safety for this family helped to see the reasons why Nour was very insistent about knowing all the information about space or activity before she committed to it.

## Continued on...

██████ Q1: So for the first question, what were some reasons you had to move here with your family?

Father Answer: We moved here because of safety reasons.

██████ Q2: Did you have a goal set in your mind?

Father Answer: I was thinking if we came here, we would be closer and happier as a family.

██████ Q3: Where are you from?

Father Answer: We came from the middle east.

██████ Q4: How old were you when you moved?

Father Answer: I was 55 years old.

██████ Q5: Did you feel welcomed here?

Father Answer: Yes, for the most part!



Her father continued his story by stating how much he missed his family, but he cited safety as the reason for leaving his home. Then he reflected that there was no chance of going back to the Middle East and the family he left during his lifetime “due to safety concerns.” Nour was silent when her father mentioned this in his interview. Her peers, however, were saddened by this news. Dominique, who directly quoted Nour’s father when expressing his concern for him due to “having no chance of going back due to safety concerns” as a significant lesson he learned through this story. As well as Mimi who reflected on the safety of Nour’s family, stating, “even though you missed your country you are safe, and that’s the most important.” They showed empathy for Nour and her father by writing reflections to tell her what they learned about her immigration story and her family as well as encouraged Nour that her family did what “was most important” by protecting one another. The encouragement and empathy that was shown by Nour’s peers displays “a deep sense of empathy, where one’s full humanity, dignity, and

common personhood are affirmed” (Sepulveda, 2011, p. 558). Not only did Mimi and Domini reflect on the words used by Nour and her father, but they also offered encouragement and empathy – affirming they cared for Nour and the family whose story she told.

She later confirmed her fears of wanting to know who was involved in activities and the reception she would receive in an interview when she talked about how anxiety developed for her when she had to speak English in front of groups of people. Nour stated:

“I have anxiety obviously a little, umm I didn’t think I had until I came here, which was kind of like a little surprising to me and something that I didn’t want. Because I want to try to be outgoing. I wanna try like something new, especially like, for someone who likes to like try something new and likes a change. It’s not a very good thing, but for ENL kids, umm, maybe like give them time. Like if they say I’m not comfortable doing that some teachers don’t really get that like, they might think they just wanna get, like they don’t wanna do it but, they just wanna get it out of the way. But for me, I don’t do that.”

Throughout the immigration story and her subsequent interview, she talked about the need for spaces and “time” where she was “comfortable” speaking. There is a need for space for her to understand the material, language, and audience. She did this first with her father by letting him know he didn’t have to answer the questions she posed if he was uncomfortable. Similarly, she did the same thing for him that she wished others at the school would do for her. Nour created a space where her father could be comfortable speaking and revealed a way out of the conversation for him to protect him as he shared his story. She showed empathy for him by giving him the

same feeling of safety, which I believe is caused by her previous oppression. She wished she could have at school.

One lesson I learned from Nour, her father, and her peers, is that sharing aspects of life that focus on safety and oppression is not always welcome or comfortable. Nour was silent when her father spoke of the family they would never see again. Then, she freely spoke with me about the need for understanding and compassionate spaces due to the anxiety she developed due to her journey in America. Safety came in new forms as she considered leaving as a refugee but also as she attended school in a new country and language. These life experiences show injustice and oppression due to safety concerns, revealing that a classroom that contains immigrant students could be a space where students feel welcomed and safe. Feelings of safety start by building a pedagogy of *acompañamiento* and creating a space to foster “fellowship and engagement with one another” (Sepulveda, 2011, p. 561). By sharing our experiences and reflecting on one another’s lives, we build kindredness and solidarity (Gay, 2018, p. 40), as shown in the reflections of the story where Mimi and Dominique agreed with Nour that the safety of her family “was the most important.” Due to Nour’s need to feel safe in her classroom community, and through her vantage points of oppression (Moya & Hames-Garcia, 2000), we learned how safety and community were necessary for Nour. Therefore, my classroom will continue to use peer reflections to encourage students and to show we are learning from one another. Additionally, by inviting students to share their experiences and create connections with other’s experiences through literacy projects that ask students to share what they know, classroom “establish bridges (connections) across factors that separate” (Gay, 2018, p. 40). Creating a sense

of belonging can also create a community for students to feel safe in spaces that are unfamiliar to them (Vasudevan, 2014), as shown in the next section.

### ***Recognition of community as an essential aspect in our lives***

The theme of family continued in the story focused on Nour's journey. We learned a lot about Nour and her family through this project, as she created a story about her father, and a classmate, Dominique, created a story about Nour's journey. The focus on Nour's journey was simply a description of her feelings concerning leaving her home and coming to America - focusing on the loss of family, learning a new language, and making new friends. Nour stated, "It was quite scary. I didn't know what to expect. I didn't want to come here, but my family decided to come here to start something new...I started getting along with people and it was kind of easy for me." The admission that finding friends was "easy" for Nour astonished me. Nour is a student who is very shy in front of her peers, rarely volunteers in class, and frequently asks if she can sit out of presentations or not participate in classroom activities, especially if the activity would identify her faith, language, or religion. However, through this story, I understood that she was okay sharing information about herself with people she knows and feels comfortable with - as Nour clarified our classroom was a space which held "some of the first friends she met in the U.S." Creating a space where students are comfortable in school is echoed in Sepulveda's (2011) ideas about the need for a culture of belonging (p. 558) and supporting alternative spaces on school grounds where students can share their experiences. Nour's willingness to share spurred several students to comment on her bravery. My impression of sharing her life with us is she felt a sense of belonging and safety, knowing many in the class were all disclosing difficult journeys.

The need for these classroom conversations is necessary to build classroom community focused on culture and experiences due to Nour's ability to open up to us.

In a subsequent interview, I asked Nour about her time at our school. Again, she was very complimentary to our classroom space and reiterated the need for community, stating,

I learned so much through them, and you especially, I would say...it's very hard, to find, umm, not a lot of people have the access to, like, if they want something or if they need something, help, anything at all, not a lot of people have that opportunity like or access to go to someone right away and tell them that, hey I'm having this, I'm facing that. I think this is great, especially as an ENL student, cause you can't always like say, you can't always like express how you're feeling.

Nour is calling for accompaniment through a "culture of belonging" (Sepulveda, 2011, p. 558), space where emergent bilinguals can "have opportunity" and "access to go to someone." As Nour previously stated, the need for safety is an essential part of the lives of immigrants as they learn new languages and cultural norms. Still, it is also vital for students to have a community where they can easily find answers and feel like they belong - where they can say, "I'm having this. I'm facing that." Following a pedagogy of accompaniment can lead to the English as a new language classroom becoming an alternative space on school grounds as Nour continued to explain is a necessary part of being an emergent bilingual in a new space, "you would have someone that you trust and know like how you feel and what you're trying to say in order to like, to make the others understand what's going on."

Another example of Nour using our classroom as an alternative space or "to make others understand what's going on" is her request for help with the attendance office as she navigated immigration hearings. She would bring her paperwork to me in the morning, and ask that I speak

to the dean and attendance offices on her behalf, because “for some reason, I don’t know why, they don’t do school notes.” Nour felt that the immigration office not providing school notes would be an issue with our school, and she did not feel comfortable talking to the attendance officers about where she had been. Our classroom space became a place where she could speak freely about her issues or fear concerning school, as school became an area of oppression for her when she did not feel comfortable giving an immigration hearing notice to the office. Yet, our classroom was somewhere she could go to receive help in navigating attendance issues. The classroom became a community that she mentioned in her immigration story and continued to be a source of community throughout her schooling.

### ***Recognition of how immigration shapes lives***

One of the significant themes shown throughout the immigration stories of both Nour and her father were the references to opportunity. References to opportunity in America reveal an understanding of their life experiences (Gonzalez et al., 2005), as well as how those opportunities changed due to being in America. However, they also show an understanding and create a vantage point to speak of oppression (Moya & Hames-Garcia, 2000). Border crossings were a time of sadness due to leaving family and created fears for safety. Each story ended with a message of hope by detailing the opportunities available to immigrants due to their global moves. Also evident in the stories was the theme of affirmation as a United States citizen or affirmation that people in the stories were successful due to the length of their stay in the United

States. In both Nour's story about her father and the story Dominique created about Nour, she mentioned the family had been in the United States for five years, and they would soon be United States citizens. Through these admissions, Nour is showing how immigration has affected her identity, by stating the same fact twice in two five-minute presentations - she will be a U.S. citizen. Due to religion of students as a significant concern, I believe Nour has included the information that they worked to complete citizenship to prove her place as not only a person confident in her faith but also as someone who has lived in America and plans to be an American citizen. She detailed the knowledge of their home country and her journey to America, and she shared that she would continue a new adventure in America. In a novel focused on immigrants, *Americanah*, Chimamanda Adiche (2014) describes the need for the length of time in America as immigration affirmation when the main character states, "to earn the prize of being taken seriously among...immigrants in America, she needed more years. Six years, she began to say when it was just three and a half years. Eight years, she said when it was five" (p. 16). Likewise, Nour is affirming her place as an immigrant by telling others of her experiences, how long she has been in America, and that she used this opportunity to become a citizen. Nour repeated this point in both stories, stressing the importance of time and how that opportunity would lead to citizenship.

In an interview with Nour almost two years after the presentation of these stories, she excitedly mentioned that she met this goal. Beaming, Nour recalled the citizenship test she had taken the day before. "It was just like, he had like three checkmarks, and there was like a lot of boxes, but he was like three checkmarks are what you need on there... you passed the test and



then we approved your application and then you will have a ceremony.” This test and her resulting citizenship are something that shaped her life. Two years earlier, she mentioned her goal to become a citizen in her story; she met this goal and shared she “will have a [citizenship] ceremony.” She often studied for this test and spent many months creating study materials for herself. During her time as my teacher aide, we spent many hours where I would quiz her over the study guides she had created. She was revealing what she planned to learn due to her interests (Moll et al., 1992); Nour’s learning was motivated by becoming a U.S. citizen. She also validated her identity as an immigrant who achieved the goal she had set for herself upon arriving in the United States (Sepulveda, 2011).

## **Immigration Story Student Reflections**

### **Recognition of how immigration shaped students’ lives**

Another common theme in the reflections written by the audience for the immigration stories and the stories themselves was the experience and hardship of learning a new language. These life experiences were not only motivated by the child’s interests (Moll et al., 1992, p.134), but also motivated by the need to fit into their new spaces. Students admitted it was hard to use a new language, and found it was better to use the language with those who understood the students were still learning the common language of the school. At the end of her immigration story, Nour admitted that learning English wasn’t always easy, stating, “It was kind of hard, but the more practice the more I understood and got better at it.” One place Nour spoke of practicing her language skills was in our ENL classroom. Many students identified with these same feelings. After Nour’s story, Mimi reflected, “Nour tried hard to learn English. I think she was

brave because she didn't want to come here but wanted to communicate with others." Here Mimi is showing her support and understanding of Nour's journey. They are learning to be in a community with others by "knowing" and "valuing" the experiences of one another through a project that is culturally responsive (Gay, 2018, p. 61). Mimi understood how hard it was for Nour to learn English and use it in front of her peers. She connected it to her struggle; she equated her knowledge of Nour's story to her self-reflection, where she also had difficulties with English but persevered. Mimi also stated this made Nour brave by learning a language and how to communicate, even if she was initially resistant to the idea.

This bravery, as labeled by Nour's peers, was accomplished due to immigration, as Nour did not learn English until she started school on U.S. soil. Nour shared in her interview that she was held back a year in elementary school to give her more time to learn a language. She shared, "They actually backed me up a grade because of like, language-wise that was like the best. Those two months were really like actually helpful to learn instead of going into, like cause when I came here I was in 6th grade ... they thought it would be helpful to go back to 5th and learn for those 2 months instead of jumping right in." Nour's reflection about learning a language reveals how her life experiences (Sepulveda, 2011; Moll et al., 1992) have shown the need for time to perfect new skills, which she shared previously in her immigration story and subsequent reflection. Not only does immigration shape lives, but so does learning the language needed to communicate in a new space.

Others also reflected on the language barriers mentioned in the stories. English was a barrier for many of those featured in the stories of our classroom. The reflections on difficulties in learning a language also allowed students to reflect on positive traits they saw in their classmates, interestingly, Dominique also believed the language struggles made Nour brave.

“What she has was bravery to learn something so different,” Dominique stated. As students reflected on the challenges of learning a new language and culture, Nour’s story acted as an impetus for discussing everyday social practices (Llopart & Esteban-Guitart, 2018) and the knowledges these practices produce, as well as how they penetrated language barriers to understand the world around them. My students used the dialogue in Nour’s story to create an understanding of her experiences and to understand the linguistic issues she faced in new social spaces and the unique cultures she was encountering. As Mimi reiterated, “she didn’t want to learn English,” but she persevered and did learn to speak English. They connected her experiences with their own and praised her “bravery.” Nour also showed how she understood language learning to be a positive experience, and how she began to understand languages across the differences she experienced in her native language when she was given the time and space to learn. Her peers also offered their own accolades for what she accomplished, showing their understanding of traits their classmate encompasses. The students were building a community where they can understand and connect with one another’s experiences, as well as build one another up.

I asked students to reflect on their peer’s immigration stories because I believed this assignment would encourage students to fellowship and engage with one another (Sepulveda, 2011). As students listened to the immigration stories, they reflected on what they learned from each story; these handwritten reflections were then copied and given to each student, so all could be aware of the impact they had on one another. For example, Mimi encouraged Nour when she stated, “I learned that even though you miss your country you are safe and that’s the most important.” As Nour mentioned her anguish at leaving several times, Mimi’s words that being safe was necessary could serve as a reminder to Nour that her feelings of missing her country

were valid, but that safety is also important. I feel these reflections also reveal tenets of culturally relevant teaching, proving that the unit's design connected to the lives of students. The students' observations showed an understanding of the events in one another's journey. They were also a way to establish bridges or connections between students who had felt similar feelings in their journey. (Gay, 2018).

### **Recognition of a need for brave spaces for immigrants**

Throughout both of Nour's stories, students reflected on safety as a significant concern for the immigrants in these stories. Nour's father was the subject of her story and cited safety as the reason for leaving home; her father also reflected that there was no chance of going back to the family he left during his lifetime. They showed empathy for Nour and her father by writing reflections to tell her what they learned about her immigration story and her family, as detailed previously. Nour's story acted as a vantage point to talk about oppression (Moya & Hames-Garcia, 2000), creating a catalyst for discussing the epistemic privilege shown through Nour's journey. As Ali reflected on Nour's project she restated what Nour had lived, "It's hard coming to a new county, learning a whole complete new language, meeting people that you didn't know, suffering to get to the USA." Ali states all of the obstacles Nour was able to overcome and explain to those who listen to her story.

Nour also exhibited signs of contentment with the results of sharing her story by reflecting on the warm reception her peers gave to her, stating, "I learned that he [Dominique, the boy who created a story about her] was happy to hear my story." This statement is reflective of the goal of this project, to learn about the knowledges my students hold. However, it seems to also have empowered Nour to tell her story aloud in class and teach others about her experiences which is not something she has freely done throughout her time in my classroom. As Dominique

continued, “life has many stories and people have a lot of different stories to say. Once you understand her story you'll learn more about the person.” Dominique was “happy” to hear Nour’s story and viewed it as a chance to learn more about her.

Even though students reflected on one another’s stories and reflected on their own experience within our classroom, this was only the beginning of challenging students to share their experiences. Students were hesitant to share their stories with more classes or with other teachers. Although they were comfortable sharing pictures and stories about immigrants in our classroom, when asked about using these stories with my other mainstream students to highlight their epistemic privilege and knowledge, they were reluctant to share with any audience outside of our classroom. Students were comfortable sharing their knowledge in our space, but not in an unknown space. I realized that I had more work to do to get students to share stories about themselves so others in the community could learn from their struggles, knowledge, and expertise. Although we had a brave space, they didn’t feel this community throughout the school. Therefore, we need more projects that focused on revealing assets of the students through epistemic privilege and funds of knowledge.

### **An interview focused on school practices**

#### **Recognition of how immigration shapes lives**

After several years of learning English, Nour learned that some of her ancestors lived in Turkey and spoke Turkish. She found an online university where she could learn Turkish. Her plan upon graduating high school is to visit Turkey to see other places her ancestors have lived. This example of taking courses due to family connections is “learning motivated by the child’s interests” (Moll et al., 1992, p.134) as she seeks knowledge and culture of previous generations

of her own family. She learned not only the Turkish language, but about her family through the history course she took online at a Turkish university, where the professor noticed her last name and asked her to research a city that shared the name. She shared the stories she had learned about her family in this interview, stating,

yeah, the only thing like, I only knew basics, like I only knew that we had a city there and it's his 7th great grandfather, I think that his that he worked there and he... He built a factory where they can produce, umm, it was during the wartime, but they didn't have like obviously that advanced stuff or technology back then, so they built a factory where he built...handmade weapons...

Our conversation continued as she grew more animated, "it was mostly like handmade, and then he started to grow, as like time went by, with like technology, he...I know he has at least I think four different factories in that area that really helped with the soldiers and the, umm, I know two of the factories were for clothing and shoes and all the things that like a soldier would need."

During this conversation, I realized that she was proud of her family heritage. Her professor challenged her to include information about her family in conjunction with learning a new language. Nour was able to learn while also investigating her heritage, family, and culture. In the interview, she chose to speak about this course, specifically as a place where she felt comfortable to learn new languages - something that wasn't always easy due to the anxiety issues she faces at school. It was a great motivator for her to learn the language, and "the program had a strong home-school connection," which is what Restrepo (2008) recommends for emergent bilinguals, building on the knowledge held at home. She also stated that she loved learning about Turkey because of their focus on "history" because it was a really "big thing

culture-wise and religion-wise.” These are aspects of school that Nour enjoys - culture, religion, family, and history - as she has told me in previous interviews and projects, not only concerning our class, but any class she takes. She states how important it is here again by describing her motivation for learning her third language based on culture, religion, history, and, most importantly, family. Early & Flores (2017) also state that their research with language learners reveals that learning through the use of knowledges is evident by “honoring of all languages, cultures and experiences” (p.156). By incorporating the history of her family, Nour was honored and motivated. She continued through more courses at the university instead of just sticking with her original plan to take language courses. Her motivation through interest and family heritage led her to complete a year and a half of courses early and to become proficient in the Turkish language.

### **Implications for my classroom community**

#### ***Answering research question: What am I learning from these students?***

As students reflected on the struggles of virtual and actual others, the essential ideas throughout their reflections were that everyone has struggled, especially with language and barriers present as they attend American schools, the focus in our classroom was school or immigration barriers. The data gathered through the immigration stories and interviews of Nour, focused on my main research question, what am I learning from these students? The data shows that the lived experiences of immigration have shaped the lives of my students as they navigate languages, schools, and relationships. Through coding data and reviewing these ideas, the main themes that came from this work are a need for communities and brave spaces, which Nour shared as she detailed the need for safety due to oppressions she had experienced. There was also

a realization that these experiences and knowledges have shaped lives in ways that call for creating communities of belonging and incorporating students' assets in the school curriculum. Classrooms with language learners should be environments where there is an atmosphere of care that focuses on previous understandings students share through their work in class. As I complete the analysis of my data, I believe *acompañamiento* is a way to create this atmosphere.

The first step to create this environment for emergent bilinguals enacts Sepulveda's (2011) concept of *acompañamiento*, which calls for building affirming relationships with students. These types of relationships can foster a trusting environment that allows students to focus on schoolwork, instead of trying to learn in a situation where they struggle with concepts and are afraid to speak to teachers, adding another struggle to their lives. Like Sepulveda (2011), Goizueta (2001) feels these caring relationships should be relationships that accompany students. He states, "accompaniment includes not only being with another but also 'doing' with another" (p. 558). I believe this view of an affirming relationship with students creates conditions for working side by side with students while listening to their concerns as well as the knowledge and experiences they bring to the classrooms, both through epistemic privilege and funds of knowledge. Therefore, this data also answers the questions of the knowledge students produce and the supports I can provide to create a community of belonging. Projects should focus on connecting culture to the current curriculum (family, religion, traditions, knowledges, and experiences) in an emergent bilingual literacy classroom.

## **Conclusion**

Overall, the students' reflections and immigration stories were of much higher quality than I imagined when creating this curriculum. Students took the reflections very seriously, used the advice of the technology coach, and gave positive feedback to their peers. The



professionalism of the immigration stories was astounding, and my tears were evident in viewing more than one of these stories. This project served to learn about myself, my students, and the curriculum. Most importantly, this project served as a space for students to share their stories within our school. Students learned what they could teach others through their peer's reflections, they learned about others, and they learned about other areas of the world. Our classroom became an inclusive environment where students shared their personal stories and their family stories in a safe place. In Eva Hoffman's (1990) novel, *Lost in Translation*, she describes her immigration journey as "an awareness that there is another place" where she could be involved in different conversations and different issues (p. 170). As teachers, it is necessary to ensure that all students are aware that they can be part of these different places and issues that affect those within our classroom, and, from this project, I have learned that student's stories can show us these other places. I can use these experiences and all that they reveal to continue creating a culturally responsive literacy curriculum that follows a pedagogy of acompañamiento.

These stories strengthened my argument that projects in an emergent bilingual classroom should start with accompaniment (Sepulveda, 2011), to reveal funds of knowledge (Moll et. al., 1992) and epistemic privilege (Moya & Hames-Garcia, 2000). Using the information students disclose, I can create a culturally responsive curriculum and include student interests in the classroom. The focus of these projects is learning about knowledges and experiences to design projects that will allow students to gain literacy skills in a new language through a curriculum based on students' assets. Additionally, this project serves to question whether the projects in my classroom are culturally relevant and to find where they are not to reimagine the curriculum. These results show students engaging in a literacy classroom curriculum focused on their lives is a vital component to learn to read and write in English. Although many of these students had

reached a place where their scores on English proficiency tests remained the same or similar for several years, 92% of the students included in this phase of the study had higher test scores after a year of literacy instruction focused on the connections the students were able to make to their lives and the texts they were reading. These scores strengthen my belief that connecting curriculum to the lives of secondary emergent bilinguals is necessary for their success in high school. Curriculum based on students' strengths, not their deficits, is needed to meet the needs of emergent bilinguals.

### **Chapter 5: Ali's focus on family and religion - Phase two/year two of study**

To continue to learn about my students, I realized from phase one of this practitioner inquiry that my students responded well by diligently working on literacy projects that center around family and culture. Also, Nour's work in phase one of this project taught me that students need an alternative space on school grounds (Sepulveda, 2011), and we can create a community by making connections through shared stories. These were the themes that students stressed in

phase one of my project. Consequently, these are also the themes Nour believed to help motivate her language learning, as cited in her interview. Therefore, I designed a memoir and artifactual literacy project in phase two of my study where students could incorporate stories of their family and artifacts from their communities or culture to share with the class. The story below is one example of sharing family stories through artifacts.

### **Importance of family stories - a vignette**

Chet, a shy, seventeen-year-old, volunteered to present the artifactual literacy project first. He stood in my classroom and described a coat his grandmother had made for him. She made the coat before he was born to be used in his wedding and on holy days in their culture. I watched as he became emotional about his grandma in front of his peers and I. With tears in his eyes, he reflected on what he wanted the classroom community to learn about this presentation, “I want them to learn about my culture and how old my cloth is. And how hard was it to make and it is very precious to me. And I want them to learn how this cloth help me remember things....like my grandmother who is still” in a different country. This emotion in a literacy project was a new experience for me. Students were respectful and silent until he was able to continue talking through his tears. As the teacher, I was awed by his emotion over a school project. As a practitioner researcher, my thoughts immediately jumped to what I could learn about this family and culture by designing all literacy projects with cultural relevance as the starting point.

When Chet finished, the students had an informal conversation talking about members of their own families they missed. I was stunned into silence as Dominique described a grandfather he had not seen in ten years, and Moe described not being in with his family until after his grandfather had passed. They made connections to one another and discussed family they may

never see again. As I reflected on this conversation throughout the next week, I realized students need a space to make these connections between home and school. They need a space to explore the household knowledges (Moll et al., 1992) and family relationships they hold through literacy projects that combine literacy learning and their family, culture, and communities.

### **Issue and Purpose of Practitioner Inquiry Study**

My commitment to storytelling began with a feeling that students should share their funds of knowledge in the classroom as a method of accompaniment or fellowship and engagement with one another (Sepulveda, 2011). After phase one of this project, the welcoming unit of immigration stories to begin our school year was still a part of our classroom. Yet, I felt more literacy projects were needed that focused on community after analyzing Nour's work. Therefore, in phase two of this research study, students completed immigration stories in August - September of year two and an artifactual literacy project in October of year two in my English as a new language classroom. The task was for students to create immigration stories based on someone in the community, but Ali focused on both her mother's story (completed in phase one of the project) and her father's story (complete in phase two of the project). She created two immigration stories to highlight the journey of her parents. Additionally, Ali created an artifactual literacy project based on her godmother. The artifact she described was a necklace her godmother gifted to her at first communion. In this chapter, the stories focus on Ali, one from the perspective of her mother, one from the perspective of her father, and one story from Ali's perspective (the artifactual literacy project). All three of these stories contain themes centered on family and community, which both help to define funds of knowledge. Moll and his colleagues define funds of knowledge as the skills gained culturally and historically from family, community, and household knowledge (1992). The memoir Ali created was very brief, and used

here only to strengthen points she made in the three stories of the immigration journeys and artifacts. I chose Ali's stories due to the number of stories I had about her family as well as the impact they had on me as a teacher. Ali was engaged throughout these projects and produced some of her best work in my classroom when writing about her family. I learned a lot about her knowledges and home life by listening to her stories. When I began coding the stories and artifactual literacy project, I realized many aspects of Ali's funds of knowledge were accounted for - life experiences, family, community, and culture (Gonzalez et al., 2005).

By inviting students to tell their family and community stories, I hoped to learn about student's assets and knowledges in an attempt to connect with students and create a curriculum which allowed students to practice literacy skills and share their experiences during school. However, in phase one, I quickly realized that students were also sharing vantage points of oppression (Moya & Hame-Garcia, 2000) when sharing the difficult journeys faced by their family members in their reasons for immigration, in the immigration journey, and in the aftermath of migration. Campano, Ghiso, and Welch (2016) define epistemic privilege as "the unique knowledge of historically minoritized identities" (p.9). They also state that building a community of belonging is one way to reveal epistemic privilege in educational research due to the cultivation of relationships and commitments made to work together. The authors argue that one way to reveal epistemic privilege in multicultural communities and learn from all group members is to focus on "congregation" (Campano et al., 2016, p. 22) by working alongside one another toward a common goal. I believe using Sepulveda's (2011) pedagogy of accompaniment is one way to reveal epistemic privilege as Campano (et al., 2016) describes.

Therefore, the revelation of epistemic privilege in a classroom focused on a pedagogy of accompaniment and funds of knowledge was the intention in phase two of this project; to learn

about one another and share stories while honoring the knowledge students hold. An environment that honors knowledge is what I strive to create in my classroom. The units of the curriculum in phase two are detailed below.

## Curriculum Units

The classroom followed the same format for the immigration story unit as presented in phase one. The graphic detailing the steps of the project are below:



The graphic is a checklist titled "Immigration Story Checklist" with a red checkmark icon. It lists the following steps, each with an empty checkbox:

- ☐ Listen to "The Immigrant" podcast, NPR's Embedded
  - ☐ Complete listening comprehension questions and reflective writing prompts
- ☐ Watch Disney's *Coco*
  - ☐ Complete listening comprehension questions and reflective writing prompts
- ☐ Passenger Search on [libertyellisfoundation.org](http://libertyellisfoundation.org), listen to stories, discuss findings
- ☐ Find and view You Tube Videos titled My Immigration Story, discuss videos
- ☐ Creating the Story
  - ☐ Review Moth Radio Hour's Storytelling Tips
  - ☐ Write and practice interview questions
  - ☐ Interview your source
  - ☐ With the technology coach, create a presentation of pictures, slides, etc.
  - ☐ Record your story and peer edit
  - ☐ Revise then present story to the class

Immediately following the immigration story unit, we paired the graphic novel of *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Fordham et al., 2018) with an artifactual literacy project. In the book, Scout and Jem find artifacts crafted by Boo Radley based on his observations of them. As I was teaching this novel, I read an article about using artifactual literacy in an English language arts classroom (DeJaynes, 2018). I wondered if students were sharing "culture" and "heritage" in the cosmopolitan framework the author used for these projects (DeJaynes, 2018), what I could learn about student's funds of knowledge (Moll et al. 1992) through artifacts as both "culture" and

“heritage” are tenets of the funds of knowledge theory. In DeJaynes (2018) article, students brought an object to class and presented the object as an artifact using the U.S. National Archives Guide, and then explained to their peers the importance of their object to their family and culture. Consequently, my students created an artifactual literacy story based on the artifact guide in the U.S. National Archives “Analyze an Artifact” website (2018).

The unit steps were as follows:

1. Introduction to the “Analyze an Artifact” website

<https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/artifact.html> and rubric

a. Including time for student questions and concerns

**Artifactual Literacy Assignment Rubric**

- The PARTS of the artifact effectively described using at least **two** elements from the artifact guide.

\_\_\_\_\_/5

- The PARTS of the artifact effectively described using at least **two** elements the artifact guide.

\_\_\_\_\_/5

- MAKING SENSE of the artifact is effectively described by answering at least **four** questions from the artifact guide.

\_\_\_\_\_/10

- HISTORICAL EVIDENCE of the artifact is effectively described by answering at least one of the artifact guides’ questions.

\_\_\_\_\_/5

- Grammar and spelling are correct

\_\_\_\_\_/5

- At least 2 pictures are included

\_\_\_\_\_/5

- The student speaks loudly and clearly

\_\_\_\_\_/5

- Gives 8 – 10 ways this artifact shapes who you are, what you think, and/or what you believe due to the artifact or the events surrounding the artifact

\_\_\_\_\_/ 10

Total \_\_\_\_\_/50

2. Teacher presentation of a family artifact using the “Analyze an Artifact” website and rubric

a. After the presentation students used the rubric to grade the teacher presentation

b. Time for students to ask questions about my family artifact

3. Students had two class days to work on this project in addition to reading the graphic novel.

4. Student presentations

a. Peers wrote three - four sentence reflections about each artifact presentation

choosing at least one of these questions to answer:



- What did you learn from this story?
  - What experiences have you had that are similar?
  - What was important about this person's artifact? Why?
  - Ask your own questions about the artifact or focus on feedback for a different part of the presentation.
5. Students wrote their own reflection answering the question: What do you want those viewing your story to learn?
  6. Peer reflections were copied and given to each student.

At the end of this unit, I collected and analyzed all reflections and artifactual literacy projects for predetermined funds of knowledge and pedagogy of acompañamiento codes. The collected data is from a students in a class during year two of the project.

The data analyzed in phase two of the study was analyzed in the second year of the study, after completing Nour's chapter. After realizing how much data I had collected for Ali in phase two, I went back to phase one and coded her original immigration story about her mother collected during phase one.

### **Research questions**

As my students worked through literacy projects in the classroom, my questions began with a research stance, focusing on what I was learning from these students. My research focus was getting to know the students first. Then I could use this information to develop my curriculum and enact culturally relevant pedagogy as a teacher.

The main research question:

What am I learning from these students?

A subsequent question followed:

How do I use this knowledge to develop culturally relevant pedagogy?

### **Introduction to Focal Student**

Ali created the story about her mother as a freshman in my English as a New Language level two class. She volunteered to recreate an immigration story about her father and completed the artifactual literacy project as a sophomore in the same course. Due to her WIDA access scores, a test used yearly in many states to determine English proficiency, and programing changes in our school, she remained in level two of the course for two school years to practice English language skills. Ali is the only student who participated in phase one and two of this project. She created an immigration story about her mother in phase one. In phase two, she decided she would like to participate in this project again. The second time, she created an immigration story about her father.

Ali was born in the United States to immigrant parents. Her parents immigrated together for better opportunities instead of continuing to farm in their hometown. She is interested in school because her parents stress the importance of continuing her education as they could not attend school past middle grades. When Ali's grades dropped in her high school classes, her parents intervened by asking for tutors and monitoring homework and grade reports. Ali is a quiet girl who spends most of her time with her family, church community, and neighbors. She lives in an apartment building where many of the tenants are from the same country as her parents and good friends of her family. Ali tells stories of their weekends where the families

gather to cook and socialize. Many members of this community also attend the same church as Ali's family. Consequently, Ali does not have many friends outside of her home community within the school. She is outgoing in the ENL classes, but other teachers report she is shy and reserved.

One student who reflected on Ali's work is Eduardo. He is also the son of immigrants and lives in the same apartment building as Ali. Their parents are close friends, and they attend many of the same gatherings. Eduardo is also a sophomore. His focus is mainly on family, as he is the oldest sibling of four brothers. Eduardo is often the sole caretaker for his brothers, but thoroughly enjoys his family and speaks of them regularly. Eduardo enjoys helping his family with homework and reading to his younger siblings, but he usually does not complete his assignments. Other students featured due to their reflections about Ali's stories are Chet, described in the vignette above, and Moe. Chet is seventeen years old. He transferred to our school from a neighboring community school at the beginning of the school year. He is a charming, shy boy, who makes it a point to speak to each student, teacher, and aide daily. His family migrated several years ago, and he often mentions the family members who still live in his home country. Moe is sixteen years old. His family is from Egypt, and they spend every summer in Egypt with their extended family. Moe has been in English as a new language class with Ali for two years, and they are good friends who spend time together outside of class.

## **Results of Phase Two**

### **Reflections on the movie Coco**

Many students connected the movie's main character, Miguel, with their own lives and families. Many were empathetic of the immigration situation of the movie where Miguel could

not cross the border. This empathy for Miguel's situation is consistent with Sepulveda's concept of empathic fusion, or "relating to another person as a whole human being," a tenet of *acompañamiento*" (Sepulveda, 2011, p. 559). This type of empathy was also evident in phase two of the project as the reflections focused on sadness for Miguel's immigration journey and connected to other migrants in the world. Ali connected Miguel's situation to deportation stories of those in her community.

### *Recognition of a need for brave spaces for migrant families*

In the movie, Miguel and his grandfather cannot return to the land of the living due to border regulations. Students wrote reflections after the movie concerning the connections they saw with today's immigrants and the migrants in *Coco*. Ali wrote,

I learned from this immigration movie that it's not easy to be in the living world and go from there to the dead world. It's like getting deported and going through this long process to get to the country you came from. Then you have to stay in THAT country for 10 years and go through this process depends what happened. It was hard for Miguel because he had to do several things to get back to the living world. It took him some effort.

In this reflection, Ali recounts life experiences (Gonzalez et. al., 2005) of those in her community. Although she does not mention her classmate's deportation due to an expired visa, a friend of Ali's was deported from our school just a few weeks before she wrote this reflection. This movie reflection served as a place for Ali to connect the virtual character with those in our school whose families were required to wait ten years to apply to reenter the United States. She knew this information as we had just read a newspaper article from our school newspaper about our former student and friend. The story detailed his wait for immigration proceedings in

September of year two before he could return for college. Through the connection in this movie and life experiences, Ali connected and wrote about experiences of injustice or inequity (Moya & Hames-Garcia, 2000) of migrants and the efforts they took to be in America.

Ali continued her reflection by correlating her own life experiences with the characters who were mean to Miguel and his grandfather due to their immigration status: “I learned about myself to not do people wrong. Treat people the way you want to be treated. Don’t wish someone bad luck also because karma will get you back eventually.” The kindness of a community is necessary for migrants, as Ali mentions the migrants’ treatment in the movie and gives the reminder “to not do people wrong.” This culture of belonging (Sepulveda, 2011, p.558) is essential as migrants navigate borders and language barriers as they did in the movie, and as Ali’s classmate did in life.

As a result of Ali’s reflections concerning the immigration story of a movie character connected to the story of her classmate, I believed my classroom should be a place that is welcoming to students and invites them to share their life experiences. As students connected to Miguel’s struggles, Ali was able to express her ideas about her classmates’ process of deportation. She also thought about the difficulties of those in their communities. These concerns show the need for brave spaces and support for migrants and their families. As Ali expressed kindness is necessary for those encountering issues of immigration. Alternative or brave spaces are needed for those who struggle with new places, new cultures, and new languages in schools as well as neighborhoods.

### **Immigration Stories - Maria’s Story**

After a unit where students encountered several different immigration stories through various mediums of print, videos, podcasts, and blogs, as well as sharing their reflections of

these stories with one another, students created their own stories. In phase one, we used Google slides to format the immigration stories' words and pictures and record voice-overs using either iMovie or the video app on the student-issued iPads. This technology worked well for the students and I, so we continued in phase two using the same format of Google slides and voice-overs. Again, I asked students to interview someone in the community, and I came prepared with a list of volunteers. Yet, the students did not use the list of volunteers I had provided. Instead, they used their own stories, peers, and family members as subjects for the immigration stories.

### ***Recognition of how culture and experiences shape lives***

The first immigration story Ali created was about her mother, Maria. After collecting all data for phase two of the study, I went back to phase one and found Ali's story about her mother, Maria. In phase two, after all data had been collected, I realized I could tell a more complete story of Ali by using both stories she had created in both phases of this project. Therefore, I returned to phase one and coded Maria's story which Ali created in phase one. Maria's story was analyzed along with the rest of the data I collected from her in phase two. My initial coding of this story was in phase two a year after she had completed and presented this story and the following story about her father.

One distinctive feature of this story was the entire family's photo on each slide - Ali, her parents, and siblings. Only the first few slides did not feature a picture of the family. These slides were the story's opening, where Ali asked her mother what life was like before arriving in the United States. This slide showed a picture of a migrant farmworker, as Maria's voice answered, "It's very different, there's not a lot of jobs opened. Work hard and get a low amount of money." As I considered these words, I realized the opportunity to work in America could be a reason for Maria's immigration. As she compares her current home to her former home as "very

different” due to job opportunities, this example highlights the pay inequalities for those working in low paying jobs due to opportunity or lack of education; as Maria mentions she was only able to finish grades 1 - 6. Her inequity (Moya & Hames-Garcia, 2000) due to low pay as a hard-working migrant farmer is the only difference she notes between the two countries. Even though Maria now works two jobs, as she states in the next part of the story she works at a “grocery store” and is pictured as a food service worker, she still believes “she would like to have a better job.” As Maria shares this information with her daughter, the pictures shown are of Maria working in various contexts. Ali begins her story about her mother’s immigration focused on the differences in her jobs before and in the United States and highlights the hard work that is part of her life. The household knowledge (Moll et al., 1992, p.133) of working hard in many different contexts to earn money is demonstrated at the beginning of this story as Ali sets up a view of her mother as holding knowledge in many different areas of work. At the beginning of her story, Maria’s life experiences demonstrate her hard work throughout several years of her life, even for “low pay,” and even if she wants a “better job.” These lessons echo Ali’s reflection at the end of her story when she states, “I want people to see how hard and how much effort you put in just to come to this country to see family and for the money.” She has learned from her mother that one reason for coming to the United States is for “money,” and it takes effort or hard work. This idea is such an essential part of their family knowledge and experience that she chose this example to begin the story of her mother’s life journey. Additionally, this view is also part of the story Ali creates about her father in the second immigration story.

### ***Recognition of a need for brave spaces for migrant families***

Continuing the story, Ali shifted to focus on Maria’s journey to the United States. Maria was candid and explained how some experiences were hard for her. “It was very difficult,

adapting to a new environment, new temperature, new language.” The changes she describes are life-altering and show how “difficult” the journey was and the aftermath of the journey upon her arrival. As Maria’s lists the prior experiences she adapted to, she continues by explaining. “I was crying, because I was so frustrated that I couldn’t communicate with anyone.” This moment of emotion shows how difficult the life changes were. It also highlights how much she has learned as she speaks about her life experiences (Gonzalez et al., 2005) of learning a new language in English, her second language. As I reflected on Maria’s words, I thought about my own students and the barriers they face to learn new languages. As stated throughout this research, to help students not feel “frustrated” about communication, we need alternative spaces on school grounds (Sepulveda, 2011) where students can learn a language together and expand the knowledge they hold.

Additionally, I considered how having these alternate or brave spaces (Aroa & Clemens 2013) may have affected Ali as she did not learn English until beginning preschool in our district. In an interview Ali shared, “When I started preschool that’s where I began speaking English.” She went on to state that learning two languages is hard. Ali stated she wasn’t interested in learning other languages because “learning two languages itself is pretty hard already.” The experiences Ali and her mother had to learn new languages were similar. They learned these languages out of a necessity to speak to those in their community. However, Maria expanded on her experiences and mentioned that she “cried everyday for months” as she tried to acclimate to the language and culture.

They both describe this endeavor as “difficult” (Maria) and “pretty hard” (Ali). However, they persevered due to a need to communicate. Additionally, considering the number of new experiences Maria describes as she adapted to her new environment, these experiences



reveal a need for spaces to share frustrations and emotions as learning is motivated by the interests (Moll et al., 1992) and necessities of the students to communicate with those in their environments.

Ali also reflected on the effect of these stories on her life, “I want people to see how hard and how much effort you put in just to come to this country to see family and for the money. We don’t come to sell drugs.” Ali has previously mentioned stereotypes of others, causing her emotional distress due to her Mexican heritage. She has spoken out anonymously in school publications about racism and the need to understand your peers before judging them. Here she is presenting expectations of bad immigrants that she has heard of as a descendant of Mexican migrants. Ali is focused on changing that view of her family and heritage to detail her parents’ effort and work ethic to enter the United States and as contributing members of society.

### *Recognition of community as an essential aspect in our lives*

The final part of Maria’s story focused on the family and community she left. Ali asked her mother, “What do you miss from the country you came from?” In other students’ stories, their immigrant subjects had mentioned different traditions or items they missed due to leaving one country for another. However, Maria paused before answering the question. She stated, “People I met they were really loving to me and I truly miss them.” The sadness reflected in her words continues as Ali moved to the next slide, which was a picture of Maria’s four brothers and four sisters. As this picture crossed the screen, she mentioned she would only go back to “visit family.” Maria’s words describe her recognition of “loving people” and “family” as a need for community as an essential part of life. In her experiences, the love she shared with other people was what she missed most from her life in before coming to America. As Maria reflected on being part of a culture of belonging (Sepulveda, 2011, p. 558) in her home country, she also

noted that one of her achievements of “being here in the US” was “Kevin growing up well with the help from others.” Therefore, in several of these slides, Maria explains to the audience how vital positive relationships (Sepulveda, 2011) with others are in her life both before and now in the United States. Maria gave the first hint of how important community and family also are in the life of Ali’s family through these slides. As I continued to listen to Ali’s stories, I also began to see that Ali believes family and community are essential.

For example, during a writing day in class, the students began discussing the recent death of two of Ali’s family members, her grandmother and grandfather. A classmate had seen this news on Snapchat and asked Ali how she was. Eduardo answered for her and mentioned Ali had made pancakes, her grandfather’s favorite meal, and shared it with their friends and apartment community to honor him. As Eduardo told this story, they both began to laugh about Alex’s cooking skills. Eduardo stated the women in their families keep trying to teach her as their culture called for “women who are good cooks.” I didn’t realize their families were so connected, or that they were members of the same church. Following the deaths of her grandparents in another country, Ali’s community in the United States had pulled together to honor her grandparents and provide comfort to the family. Therefore, the culture of belonging (Sepulveda, 2011, p. 558) within a community, which her mother mentioned in her immigration story, was also realized with church members and neighbors in the United States. The need for a community of positive relationships was evident in Maria’s story, and the stories Eduardo was moved to tell about Ali’s home life. Since community is an essential part of the lives of students, building relationships in the classroom to create a community should be part of a curriculum that seeks to connect students to “establish bridges” or connections “across factors that separate” (Gay, 2018, p. 40) students as they learn about one other. Using peer reflections of projects to

connect what students learned from each story told is one way to begin to create these bridges and communities.

## **Immigration Stories - Leon's Story**

### *Recognition of how culture and experiences shape lives*

Ali's story about her father, Leon, was written and presented in phase two of the study. It began with her narration of information about her father's life before immigrating to America. As she did at the beginning of her mother's story, she started by explaining her father's work ethic and education in his home country. The first several slides also contained pictures of her father growing up or visiting family with pictures of their extended relatives. Ali states, "In the 1980s he lived in ... like country side. They got cows like a little farm. My dad only went to school til 2nd grade." These facts about her father echo the information Ali also gave about her mother; they were farmers and did not complete school. Again, Ali begins the story of her father's journey by highlighting the life experiences (Gonzalez et.al., 2005) of her father that differ from her own life just as she had done with her mother's story.

Ali again foregrounds her family's hard-working nature, beginning with the first job her father had, then continuing with his current employment. She also mentions that her father was unable to complete school, just as she mentioned about her mother. However she stressed that their lack of schooling was not due to unwillingness to work or attend school. She explained to the class that her parents had to walk miles to the nearest school. They were afraid to walk due to "rapes and kidnapping" plaguing the route to school in their small community. The framing of Ali's story reveals that she knows her parents' oppression, hardships, and experiences and wants to share these experiences with her audience. I believe she is sharing epistemic privilege of her family, Moya and Hames-Garcia (2002), often cited as the influential scholars of epistemic

privilege, define it as “a special advantage with respect to possessing or acquiring knowledge about how fundamental aspects of our society operate to sustain matrices of power” (p.479). The key idea in this definition is the experience or “acquiring knowledge” factor (Moya et al., 2002). This definition borrows heavily from Mohanty’s ideas about experience and cultural identity, stating, “...that experience, properly interpreted, can yield reliable and genuine knowledge” (Mohanty, 2000, p. 32). In other words, epistemic privilege is a condition of the experience of oppression. By sharing the knowledge of oppression her parents had faced, Ali along with her audience could better understand other forms or contexts of oppression.

After foregrounding the story in a way that shows her father as hard-working and as someone who did not have the privilege of finishing school, Ali adds one more slide about her father from her perspective: “My dad cares too much for us. He’s such a good dad to us. If we are in need of food or money he would work harder. Right now he works two jobs.” Ali recognizes the sacrifices that her father makes for their family. Through this statement, she demonstrates that family (Gonzalez et al., 2005) is a leading part of her father’s life. In fact, Ali believes Leon “cares too much” meaning he puts them first even at his own expense. This quote shows how family is a significant factor in Ali’s life, but it also shows that hard work is part of the household knowledge (Moll et al., 1992, p.133) Ali has gained from her parents.

The next slide features Leon’s picture in his two work uniforms, where he works as a “busboy” and “dishwasher” at two local restaurants. As I reflected on Ali mentioning both her parents currently working two jobs, it became apparent that hard work to make ends meet was a significant part of their lives. Part of this family’s knowledge is to work hard; however, in the same slide Ali also mentions that her father did not finish school. This is a very similar format she used to tell the story of her hard-working mother, immediately followed by the information

that she also did not finish school. I wondered if the lack of opportunity to finish school for both parents was one reason they stress the importance of education for Ali and her brothers. The life experiences (Gonzalez et al., 2005) of Leon and Maria seem to influence the choices made by Ali about school and work. Ali has mentioned in classroom conversations that her parents will not let her get a job until she finishes school. Given the amount of time the parents spend working outside the home, Ali's education was especially important. I think this is interesting considering how hard both parents work for their family. They work so hard that Ali believes her father "cares too much for us." Yet, they are more interested in Ali having the opportunity to finish school than to begin working. Leon's experiences that Ali positions at the forefront of the story to show how the life experiences of her parents have shaped the culture and expectations for his family to be proud of hard work and to take advantage of the opportunities to attend school.

### ***Recognition of a need for brave spaces for migrant families***

After exploring her father's hard-working tendencies, Ali transitioned to her father's journey to the United States more than twenty year ago. When asked about his journey, Leon replied, "It was really hard. I crossed a big, hot desert." Due to the conversations my students have had about deportation raids for immigrants and their trepidation of news stories concerning immigration throughout the last several years, I was surprised Ali included this aspect of her father's story. However, it was also humbling due to the trust she had in our classroom community to share this story with us. Campano, Jacobs, and Ngo (2014) state, "...minoritized communities and identities provide unique and invaluable epistemic vantage points from which to understand our shared world" (p. 99). This revelation was "unique and invaluable" (Campano et al., 2014) in my understanding of Ali and her family. Although the class had studied

immigration stories where characters or real people shared their experiences crossing borders, this was the first moment where I realized I knew someone personally who had made such an arduous journey. Additionally, as I continued to reflect on Ali's sharing of this story, I realized our classroom was a space where she was able to share this information as her identity was validated (Sepulveda, 2011); she was part of a group of students all sharing similar experiences and stories of their family members on difficult journeys.

Both parents also mentioned the sadness based on leaving their family and not being confident they would reunite with those family members. Ali's father talked about how hard his journey was, stating, "It was really hard. I crossed a big, hot desert." Yet both parents ended their story by speaking of "opportunity" and "living life to the max" in the United States. These insights paired with Ali's reflections detail the American Dream narrative of hardships experienced during the journey and after due to migrants' social class expectations based on stereotypes. As Ali mentioned in an earlier reflection, "we didn't just come here to sell drugs." Ali's words work to show how her family is different from the negative view of immigrants she has heard from others; they are instead the proverbial good immigrants working for a better life.

# Who? What? When? Where? Why?

My dad

Coming to the United States

In 2000

In United States

For a better life for our family

Leon's story continued with his reflection of migration stating the most challenging part about leaving was, "leaving my parents knowing I don't know when I will see them." Leon describes his journey as "hard" and "difficult," not only in crossing a desert to come to the United States but in the aftermath of the journey when he realizes he may not see his parents again. Unfortunately, Ali followed up this slide by stating that Leon's mother passed away "a few years ago" before he was able to visit her again. In this vantage point to talk about oppression (Moya & Hames-Garcia, 2000), we learn of Leon's journey and reasons for coming to America. Although he had to leave many family members behind and put his own life at risk in a "big, hot desert." Leon thought it was the best decision for his future family. He and Maria crossed the desert together, and both described it in their immigration stories as difficult. Ali was born shortly after they arrived in America. I imagine Ali has heard this story many times, and she skillfully told of the obstacles her parents faced to create opportunities for her that they did not have in their previous home. As I reflect on what she has mentioned through both stories about hard work and opportunity, I can only wonder how this affects her schoolwork and work ethic

and begin to understand why she tries as hard as she can even in classes she reports as too hard for her.

One example of hard work and opportunity is Ali spending most of her study periods in my room daily working with an teacher aide on Algebra homework. This extra work has immensely paid off for Ali. In her freshman year, she did not pass Algebra 1. After speaking with Ali about a way to fix this grade, she decided to spend most days working with the aide privately. She also requested that the aide only work with her personally in my classroom. Ali was very against the aide accompanying her to Algebra classes. Even though Ali wants help, she wants to receive support in an alternative space on school grounds (Sepulveda, 2011), where her peers do not see the extra help she is receiving. In fact, just a few weeks after this project, the yearbook advisor asked if anyone in my classroom would be willing to share their experiences in an interview to be published in the yearbook or student newspaper for a special feature on speaking more than one language. I immediately thought of Ali. However, when I asked her to meet with Mrs. Casey, she was vehemently opposed due to other students reading about her in a publication. She said she did not want to be singled out or made fun of due to her differences. This encounter combined with Ali's previous requests and reflections on her parent's experiences reminded me how important it is for students to have a brave space within the school that offers a culture of belonging (Sepulveda, 2011, p. 558) to share their experiences and family experiences freely.

### ***Recognition of culture and experiences shape lives***

As Leon's story continued, even though he left his parents and extended family, he stated he came here with his wife "for a better life for our family." Again family is featured as the



motivating factor in Leon's life. Although he encountered difficulties throughout the process of immigrating, he planned to create a better experience for his family in America through hard work and new opportunities. His insistence that life would be better for the "family" also paints a picture of Ali's family as an essential aspect of their lives. Her father explains that creating a safe space to pursue opportunities with his wife, "a better life," was crucial even though his children had not been born. The importance of their family and the life experiences that led to creating "a better life" is an important aspect of Ali's family and the community they created in America. Her parents cared enough to leave behind many in their previous life for new opportunities and different experiences for their future children. In writing prompts throughout the school year, Ali mentions her focus on family consistently. In one paragraph she writes about their summer together, "My adventure with my family was really fun. It doesn't matter where we go it always turns out amazing memories." Ali's focus is being with her family as the best experiences, just as Leon focused on their family. Family is an essential aspect of Ali's life, just as it is for Leon.

Ali's peers reflected on Leon's sacrifices by leaving his family behind and in migrating for this future family. Chet's words revealed what he learned from Ali's story and what his classmates should also glean from the story, "I want them to learn about how blessed they are to be here. And how hard is it to get here in the United States...And a lot of people pray to come here and wish they are here in the U.S." Chet's reflection shows that even though some people also want to come to America for "a better life," as Leon did, they also do not realize those dreams. Chet is connecting the life experiences that Leon has shared with his own family who "pray to come here," as he mentions later in his own immigration story that his grandmother is still in another country and unable to migrate with the family. His family not being in the United

States is a source of anguish for Chet as his grandmother has tried to come and not successfully made the trip with other family members.

Consequently, Moe also reflected on the same aspect of Ali's story, where her father mentions creating a better life for his family. Moe revealed, "I learned alot about people i didn't know who they were. There trips were tough but good for them. Some people came here just to come here and some people came here for a better life." Moe recognizes the differences Leon faced and how the sacrifices and journeys were necessary as they were eventually "good for them." Since Ali shared these life experiences of her family with her classmates, they could see the good that came to Ali due to her father's decision and "how hard it was to get to the United States" for Leon. We also learned how important family was to Leon, through his words and Ali's, who also reflected on her father's sacrifices by stating "he cares for us too much" at the beginning of the story.

### **Artifactual Literacy Stories - Ali's necklace**

During the study of the graphic novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Fordham et. al., 2018), students presented an artifactual literacy project based on the text's plotline. In the book, Scout and Jem find artifacts crafted by Boo Radley based on his observations of the children. These artifacts mimic different aspects of the characters' lives. As I was teaching this novel, I read an article about artifactual literacy projects used in an English language arts classroom (DeJaynes, 2018). This article used important objects from student's lives to reveal more information about their family and culture. As DeJaynes did in her article, we used the same framework based on the artifact guide in the U.S. National Archives "Analyze an Artifact" website (2018). One reason I chose this project was an attempt to reveal life experiences, as well as stories about the student's family, community, and culture (Gonzalez et al., 2005). Another reason I integrated

this project in conjunction with the novel was an attempt at connecting the student's background to the content. Hermann's (2019) website about Educating English Learners praises relating to a student's knowledge:

Linking to students' personal life experiences is beneficial for a number of reasons. It can help students find meaning in content learning, and linking to an experience can provide clarity and promote retention of the learning. Relating content to students' personal lives and experiences also serves the purpose of validating students' lives, culture and experiences. (Herrmann, 2019)

Throughout the presentations, my students consistently mentioned family, community, and traditions.

### *Recognition of community as an essential aspect in our lives*

Ali's focus for this project was a necklace her godmother had given her at her first communion. Ali began her presentation with a picture of the necklace and the statement, "The necklace looks very new. I wear everyday. My godmother got it for me in 2013." The necklace is a picture of the holy family: Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. Ali and her family belong to the local Catholic church, and she has often mentioned attending services and events with her family and church community. Through this project, she is sharing "family values and traditions," specifically "religious beliefs" (Bennett, 2020), which exhibit the knowledges she holds from her family's culture and traditions. Ali mentioned several times in class that she was attending confirmation classes and learning about their religion. She was excited to be involved in the youth group and motivated to continue learning more about the Catholic faith due to her interests and her family (Moll et al., 1992, p.134).



As Ali continued her presentation, I realized how vital the church community was in her life. Within this presentation, there were pictures of her church community, including her family and godmother. She went on to describe the special relationship she has with her godmother. “My godmother was with my mom when I was born. She’s been with me my whole life. She’s like a second mom to me. She is my godmother for baptism and first communion.” This woman, who remained unnamed, has chosen to sponsor Ali throughout her life as a Catholic role model.

Additionally, pictures were included of Ali, her mother, Maria, and her godmother as Ali grew up. Her godmother is an essential part of Ali’s life and a necessary friend to her mother. She’s such an important person in their lives that she was with my mom when I was born. “The community of friends Ali’s family has built within their church and community is evident. Ali shares how essential her godmother’s presence has been while she has grown up in the church and community. Her godmother sponsored her at her baptism as an infant and was still a part of the family’s lives and community fifteen years later, as Ali began the confirmation process. This

type of accompaniment of special friendships within the family shows the “positive relationships” Ali’s family has with those in their community (Sepulveda, 2011, p. 558). Even though many in their extended family are not in the same country, they have built a community of constant and consistent people through the lives of their family. Maria also mentions a strong community that helped raise her son Kevin; she stated one of her accomplishments in the U.S. was “Kevin growing up well with others’ help.” We also see the help of their community in Ali’s life as she shares the artifact her godmother presented to her and explained the relationship they have.

As I reflected on Ali’s presentation, I realized how special this relationship with her godmother was to her and her church community. This project highlighted the importance of community and cultural traditions in the lives of Ali and her family. It also gave Ali a brave space to consider how her religious traditions and relationships “were valued and valuable” (Early & Flores, 2017, p. 165). She shows times her godmother has chosen to be a part of her life “through baptism and first communion” told through the story of a necklace given to her in “2013.”

As Ali continues the presentation, she first finishes describing the necklace’s materials and then reflects on what this artifact means to her. She states: “It reminds me of my faith in God. It reminds me that my godmother is a good person and accepted to be my godmother twice so it gives her a bigger responsibility. It reminds me that she’s been with me since birth.” These three tenets echo my earlier conclusion of Ali that faith and how culture is part of her home life and showing that family and community have been a constant presence in her life “since birth.” González, Moll, and Amanti (2005) define “funds of knowledge” as the notion that “people are competent, they have knowledge, and their life experiences have given them that knowledge” (p.

ix-x). Throughout her projects, Ali has shared this knowledge with the classroom through her reflections and stories of her family and community.

Ali effectively used literacy skills as she presented an artifact, but used the pictures in the background of her work to demonstrate the religious ceremonies attended by her families through several generations. She also explained the classes she was attending to learn the traditions of her religion at the end of her presentation. These skills are part of her household, and she sees them as part of her personal development when she states, “I’m getting closer to God by doing the first communion. I’ve been baptist and I did the confirmation.” This church community and the traditions from the church are important to Ali. She believes that she is “getting closer to god” by attending her religion’s traditional classes. At the end of Ali’s presentation, she reflected on what she hoped others would learn about her from this project. She stated, “That God is important in life and everyone needs him in their life. it is important to carry something for a long time.” This reflection underscores the central role of church traditions and community for Ali and her family.

### **Artifactual Literacy Reflections**

As I looked over the field notes I had taken after students’ presentations, my thoughts kept leading to making connections through the literacy curriculum to cultural traditions to learn more about my students’ knowledges. One note concerning Ali and Chet’s (featured in the vignette at the beginning of the chapter) projects from November 1, 2020, states, “I noticed in the first two that faith was a big reason for the artifacts that mean the most to students.” In both of these stories, their families’ cultural traditions in their home countries were practiced in a religious context in the United States. Both students included pictures of their extended families

in other countries at religious ceremonies - Ali's father and grandfather outside a catholic church, and Chet's cousins wearing similar coats as he wore for his project at a religious ceremony. They also both included pictures of their immediate families in the United States at the same church and ceremony. Their artifacts were not only part of the faith and culture, but they were also part of their families. Moll's (1992) explanation of funds of knowledge includes "historically-accumulated and culturally-developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being" (p.133). The authors found this knowledge helps students in school as they learn literacy skills.

In his peer reflection, Chet drew a similar conclusion about Ali's religious traditions and relationship with a supportive church community in the form of a godmother. He stated, "I learn about how she got her necklace. And i have same experiences because my grand mother give me this coat too." He continues listing what he learned, "That this necklace remind her of who she is and her godmother." Chet sees Ali's religion as part of "who she is." He also connects his own experiences to Ali's by relating the artifact given to him by a family member, his "grand mother" and Ali's necklace from her godmother. The students are making connections to one another through sharing their stories. Additionally, the students also spent time talking about each of these projects afterward and asking one another questions; they were showing a tenet of *acompañamiento* through "fellowship and engagement with one another" (Sepulveda, 2011, p.561).

### ***Implications for my classroom community***

#### **Answering research questions: What am I learning from these students?**

In phase one of this project, I learned about the need for brave spaces for emergent bilinguals through the barriers Nour and her peers discussed as they presented their immigration

stories and their families' immigration stories. I believe including family stories and making connections with one another would create an "alternative space on school grounds" that would validate student identities (Sepulveda, 2011). They struggled to fit into a school community where 85% of the students were white, and the majority spoke only English. In the second phase of this project, this idea of using family stories to learn from my students and create a classroom community as an impetus for literacy projects validated through the projects of Ali.

In the immigration stories Ali created, I learned about the values that are important to her family. She mentioned hard work throughout her both stories and focused on how both parents spent many hours working multiple jobs to take care of the family. Both parents also shared the "difficult" jobs they held as farmers before migrating to the United States and the opportunities they now have for "better pay" and multiple job opportunities. Because of the immigration stories, I realized how essential hard work was as a value to Ali's family. I also realized I have seen Ali demonstrate this value in my classroom as she works with an aide many hours every week to understand Algebra.

Additionally, Ali's hard work in our classroom has not gone unnoticed by her peers as they seek her expertise and help on most projects. She has become a leader in our classroom as she demonstrates her understanding of many subjects and freely offers her help to others. At the beginning of sharing these stories, Ali also provided a glimpse into why education was essential to her family. She mentioned her mother was only able to attend school "up to middle school," and her father only completed through "2nd grade." These experiences from her parents' lives help to explain why her parents place a premium on Ali passing her classes and not having a job until she has completed her high school education. Through these stories, I learned about the experiences of inequity (Moya & Hames-Garcia, 2000) in the lives of Ali's parents. Also, I was



able to see why hard work and education are essential in Ali's family's lives, based on the experiences Ali recounted about her parents.

Additionally, I learned how vital cultural traditions, such as religious traditions, were in my students' lives. In Ali's presentation focused on her godmother's necklace as a gift for her baptism in 2013, she explained how vital religion and the religious classes she had taken were historically and culturally to her family. She reiterated the importance of religion again in a writing prompt concerning family literacy activities. Ali stated, "My family doesn't read books. We usually pray. We read the Bible which is 100x better. We learn from it in a good way. We have prayer two nights in a row." Again, Ali focused on how religion is a vital part of the life of her family as well as how they spend time together. Therefore, connecting my student's cultural traditions with the cultural traditions in texts, as we did in the artifactual literacy project and this writing prompt, can offer insights into my students' experiences as they make connections to the characters and traditions in the texts we are reading. These connections can teach me about family values and my students' lives in their household as long as I'm willing to listen.

Finally, throughout these projects, I learned how important "fellowship and engagement with one another" (Sepulveda, 2011, p. 561) is in my students' lives outside of the classroom. Ali demonstrated the community her family had built with their neighbors and church community as a significant part of their lives since Ali was born and in her siblings' lives. In classroom conversations, I learned about the relationships between Eduardo and Ali and their families by listening to the ways they spent time together in a community when Ali lost a member of her extended family. This lesson also demonstrated the need for a classroom community where students can make connections to one another and "establish bridges (connections) across factors that separate" (Gay, 2018, p. 40) through listening to the stories of one another.

## **Conclusion**

These stories strengthened my argument that projects in an emergent bilingual classroom should start with accompaniment (Sepulveda, 2011), to reveal funds of knowledge (Moll et. al., 1992). Some of the student stories may also acknowledge epistemic privilege (Moya & Hames-Garcia, 2000). Using the information students disclose, I can create a culturally responsive curriculum and include student interests in the classroom. The stories of Ali made me realize that having only two projects focused on family, culture, and life experiences were not enough through a year of literacy curriculum. I need to create a literacy curriculum that is culturally responsive and connects the home knowledge of students continuously throughout the school year. By focusing on building projects throughout the school year that focus on students' assets, I can continue to learn about the experiences and knowledges of my students to connect in a culture of belonging (Sepulveda, 2011, p. 558).

## **Chapter 6: Findings from students' stories**

This study investigated my students' stories with a final goal of creating a culturally responsive literacy curriculum and a subsequent framework of policies that works toward a positive experience for secondary emergent bilinguals based on their interests and assets. By putting relationships first through the use of a pedagogy of acompañamiento, I created the necessary conditions for students to begin sharing their funds of knowledge, disclosed through stories. By starting with the question: What can I learn from these students? I analyzed the

lessons I learned from each phase of the study and changed the curriculum to fit the needs my students communicated. In the remainder of this chapter, I recalled elements gained from listening to the stories of Nour and Ali.

### **Lessons learned from Nour in phase one**

From Nour, I learned that a community of learners based on acompañamiento or alternative spaces on school grounds (Sepulveda, 2011, p. 551) was essential for emergent bilinguals. Therefore, I added space in this curriculum that focuses on peer feedback and reflection at the end of each project to build a community by learning about and discussing one another's experiences. She taught me that using peer discussions and creating a community of learners through feedback to one another and working together were part of learning a language and creating a brave space. Additionally, Nour taught me there should be places in the curriculum where students can share their stories, knowledges, and hardships.

Nour's story strengthened my argument that projects in an emergent bilingual classroom should start with accompaniment (Sepulveda, 2011) as a catalyst to reveal funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992) through the life experiences of students. After creating a relationship with Nour, she shared her experiences with me in the classroom. However, she was still very hesitant to share her ideas and experiences with others in the school. The focus of these immigration projects and my research study was to learn about students' knowledges and experiences, and to use what I learned to design projects that will allow students to gain literacy skills in a new language through a curriculum based on students' assets. The data collected from Nour's project shows students, both Nour and her peers, engaging in a literacy classroom curriculum focused on their lives as they learn to read and write in English. Curriculum based on students' strengths, not their deficits, is needed to meet emergent bilinguals' needs.

Also, phase one of the project taught me that a classroom that foregrounds students' knowledge can foster the revelations of students' life experiences throughout the curriculum. Those revelations can help practitioners evaluate whether the curriculum is culturally relevant and monitor ideas that interest students as a springboard for classroom inquiry. This type of planning could create a reciprocal relationship in the classroom, where teachers and students are learn and work together. It can give students the courage to ask questions and allow teachers to have conversations with students that lead to reflections and new pedagogies based on the needs and concerns of the students in their classroom.

### ***What I learned from Nour***

Along with an environment focused on student assets, Nour taught me that students need a feeling of safety in the classroom to share their stories at school. Nour mentioned safety concerns for herself and her family as a precursor to immigrating to the United States. Now that students are attending American schools, their feelings of security should be a priority for school staff. Due to the injustices immigrant students have experienced, creating a classroom environment based in the pedagogy of *acompañamiento* and culturally responsive practices can lead to learning to be in a community with others by “knowing, valuing, doing, caring, sharing power” (Gay, 2018, p. 61). Students created this community in their reflections of one another's immigration stories showing that they valued one another's experiences as they offered their praise and acceptance.

Moreover, listening to what interests students through the knowledge they share can allow teachers to create new projects that focus on what our students feel comfortable sharing. Learning about those in our community and empowering students to tell stories was the goal of the immigration story project. Some students did show signs of a new willingness to share their

stories and beliefs due to considering others' stories, as Nour did. We used culture as a medium for literacy instruction through reading immigration stories, writing about immigration stories, and sharing our own immigration stories. Therefore I was able to create reflections or projects that use culture and experience as a medium for literacy instruction, even while teaching state and district-mandated curriculum. This was possible by building on the students' previous knowledge and fostering a space where students are comfortable sharing their knowledge. Tyler (2013) urges teachers to create classrooms where they listen to students' voices to "provide an educational experience through setting up an environment and structuring the situation" in ways that give students agency and voice. Using funds of knowledge as a medium for literacy instruction could provide this type of experience. Nour expressed an interest in learning and speaking about her family and traditions. After phase one, the subsequent projects gave students space to connect the curriculum with their family and traditions through memoirs, artifactual literacy, and reading response journals.

Additionally, finding a way to uncover the knowledge students hold, and not just focusing on learning the tested facts for a course, can empower students. My students mentioned the knowledge they gained from one another in their reflections by encouraging one another and their similar experiences. Giving students the space to listen and learn from one another produced acceptance and understanding of one another's life events through written encouragement. This encouragement is also a tenet of culturally relevant teaching, as students engaged in collective empowerment by building one another up and accepting the stories they told (Ladson-Billings, 1994, p. 160).

### ***How I incorporated these lessons into the classroom***

Nour's stories also led me to design more projects for phase two of this study that focused on acompañamiento and funds of knowledge to create a classroom based on culturally relevant teaching. Every time I design a project, I try to remember the family, traditions, and culture should also be incorporated into the written or spoken work they produce, which led to these phase two projects:

- Artifactual literacy projects that connect an item of importance to the student's lives. Students brought family heirlooms and objects to class and created a presentation to describe why this object was essential to their lives.
- Reading response journals relating lived experiences to the texts we have read
- Memoirs that focus on what students have learned from their families
- Daily writing prompts that focus on experiences, family, tradition, and culture

### **Lessons learned from Ali in phase two**

From Ali, I learned that family and cultural traditions are an essential part of my students' lives, and they should be incorporated into the curriculum as often as possible. Ali taught me that writing what you know, such as family and cultural traditions, is a great way to practice communicating via written word. Moreover, in analyzing Ali's data, she reiterated the need for a community of learners and shared information and ideas about her family. Therefore, this chapter details what I learned. Then I used what I learned to create a curriculum and policies detailed in the appendix below that offers students an opportunity to write or present their family or cultural values and a space to share ideas with one another through peer review and community.

Again, Ali's stories strengthened my argument that projects in an emergent bilingual classroom should start with accompaniment (Sepulveda, 2011), to reveal funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992). Ali's story, like Nour's, acknowledged epistemic privilege (Moya & Hames-Garcia, 2000) based on the experiences her parents described. The stories of Ali made me realize that having only a few projects focused on family, culture, and life experiences were not enough through a year of literacy curriculum. After analyzing data for two years of this project, I felt the need to create a literacy curriculum that is culturally responsive and connects the home knowledge of students continuously throughout the school year. By focusing on building projects throughout the school year that focus on students' assets, I can continue to learn about the experiences and knowledges of my students to connect in a culture of belonging (Sepulveda, 2011, p. 558).

### ***What I learned from Ali***

Ali's story helped solidify my interpretations from phase one that students need a community where they feel safe in the classroom. Ali's stories focused on the hardships of her mother, father, and godmother. She also mentioned stereotypes within her community as an issue she faces. She stressed how we should work toward a culture of belonging (Sepulveda, 2011, p. 558) in school and with those in our lives. Ali's family had created their community far away from their family through church and neighbors. She often spoke of these community members fondly and reiterated the need for community in several of her quotes focused on family life.

Also, even though Ali was not an immigrant, but the descendant of immigrants, she reiterated the same ideas found in Nour's work from phase one - specifically how important this immigration journey was to her family. Ali's focus on culture and lack of privileges in the places her parents lived previously helped form her own identity and her family's ideas throughout her



work. In both stories about her parents, she focused on how school and hard work were essential ideas for her parents due to inequity they had experienced before moving to the United States. Specifically, her focus in both stories was a lack of equitable pay and issues affecting her parents' ability to attend school. Ali highlighted the lack of privilege her family experienced before they came to the United States and how it was still a significant factor in Ali's life. However, this lack of resources in other places also shows that hard work in jobs and school is a tenet of their family's traditions; it is part of the household knowledge (Moll et al., 1992, p.133) within their family.

### *How I incorporated these lessons into the classroom*

I built on what I discovered in phase one and two of this research to create a curriculum for secondary emergent bilinguals that foregrounds their knowledge and culturally responsive pedagogies. This practitioner inquiry study investigated my students' immigration stories and the subsequent stories and lived experiences revealed in the classroom conversations and literacy projects throughout two years of texts, projects, and writing tasks. My investigation included the behaviors, language, and interactions (Cresswell & Poth, 2018, p.90) of my students. The research determined it was necessary to build a curriculum for secondary emergent bilinguals through literacy projects designed to reveal funds of knowledge.

This study's result is the framework of curriculum ideas for one year of English as a new language included in appendix B that begins with the projects highlighted in this dissertation and adds more projects and ideas based on what I have learned from students. However, this is a recursive process where experiences and knowledges are produced by students and assessed to garner their previous insights, interests, and needs. This continuous process of integrating classroom inquiry with curriculum development allows the teacher to prioritize student needs

and knowledges and put the curriculum second. Therefore, the new projects and ideas in the appendices could change based on the population of students and what I learn from each of them. Several of these units start with editable plans purchased from teacher websites - these can be accommodated and changed to meet emergent bilinguals' needs as I learn their needs and challenges throughout the curriculum. As I continue to learn about my students, these materials will be replaced by a new curriculum that foregrounds what I have learned from students.

I spent the summer after completing phase one and two of the study designing and redesigning the current and required curriculum to reveal funds of knowledge for use as a classroom teacher. The new curriculum included several additions to the immigration stories from phases one and two (September), artifactual literacy projects from phase 2 (October), and memoirs from phase 2 (December). The yearly plan presented in appendix B below is a curriculum developed for an English as a New Language course. The monthly projects focus on the texts we read and are designed to reveal students' life experiences, assets, and knowledges. The design also creates a community working together and reflecting on what we have learned from one another.

Additionally, although secondary school policies were not the focus of my work, I created new ideas after listening to the stories of my students. I can also use students' knowledge to create a framework for students in our school building due to my role as ELL coordinator available in Appendix C. My students showed the need for alternative spaces of community in a school building, and a need to focus on their assets within the school. Therefore, student partnering with groups that meet throughout the day should be integrated into their free study hall or homeroom periods. By listening to students' stories, I can learn ways to help students feel they are part of a community as they integrate into the bigger school community.

## **Lessons that transformed my teaching practice**

Slavich and Zimbardo (2012) describe a transformational teacher as someone who “not only achieves transformation in her students, but who also models a willingness to be transformed by learning herself” (p.577). Although my goal was to create a transformation in the policies and curriculum to an asset-based view of emergent bilinguals, I hope that I also modeled an adaptation of my own ideas in the classroom as I listened to and asked about the families, cultures, and communities my students described. Upon finishing this analysis of the lessons learned from students’ stories and reviewing the events in my classroom spurred by listening to immigration stories, I realized I had also changed many of my ideas as I worked to build a secondary framework for emergent bilinguals. Although my original goal was to create student supports, my teaching transformation was also evident as I analyzed the changes I made in curriculum. My ideas about culture and family involvement in the classroom changed, as well. Also, albeit unconsciously, I created a space to “learn with students, and in which students are encouraged to learn about themselves and one another” (Nieto, 2000, p.184). From this space, I realized several things about myself as a teacher.

Before this project, I was afraid of family involvement in the classroom due to apprehension about parents’ questions that I may not be able to answer effectively. As soon as I realized how engaged and willing my students were to tell stories about their families, my predetermined ideas of families as an obstacle were dismantled. School and family partnerships are necessary to engage students in literacy curriculum effectively.

When I began teaching, my focus was on the curriculum as the purpose of my classroom environment. Often, I wondered why I had trouble connecting with students. Through Nour’s ideas and then Ali’s similar sentiments, I realized I was missing an opportunity to create

community in our classroom. By creating a brave space to share stories, I watched the community of learners form around me. As we discussed new ideas we gained from one another, I watched the students speak freely to explain the details of their culture or family and answer questions posed by their peers and me.

Finally, I am not confident that I had ever planned to include culture in our curriculum before these projects. Still, throughout this study, I realized sharing cultural customs and ideas was an avenue to get students engaged in the literacy curriculum and learn from and about one another. Additionally, as I began to think about students' culture in conjunction with the curriculum, the numerous ways literature could connect to students' stories was palpable. The wise words of Sonia Nieto (2000) seem to reiterate what I learned from this process, "affirming the diversity of students begins first as a teacher's journey...the traveler will change along the way" (p.184). I assume more changes in my ideas and pedagogies will come as I continue to listen and learn from students who have stories to tell.

## **Conclusion**

Although this study and concluding framework and curriculum for secondary emergent bilinguals is not exhaustive, it is the beginning of trying to incorporate an environment of accompaniment (Sepulveda, 2011) and a focus on family and culture in a school setting. The use of student assets is an effective way to teach literacy skills as student's gain awareness of a new language. The effort to build curriculum and policies that focus on community and family is just the beginning. Teachers of emergent bilinguals must listen to the stories students tell in the classroom and imagine a way to incorporate a curriculum that is motivated by the child's interests (Moll et al., 1992, p.134). The framework provided in this chapter is just the beginning

of reflecting on students' stories and needs. This process is recursive and perpetual. It is also a process that calls for reflection by many school staff members and brainstorming to consider meeting students' needs best. Therefore, collecting the stories of my students and coding their work for assets will continue as I strive to create a culturally relevant pedagogy. Some of the units discussed here use resources from outside entities. I plan to create new materials of my own throughout each unit based on what students teach me about their needs and assets as we use the materials. The goal of practitioner inquiry is "transforming teaching, learning, leading and schooling" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009, p.119), which, I believe, calls for continuous reflection on the words and products of students. Emergent bilinguals need spaces where practitioners continually reimagine curriculum and policies to create an asset based curriculum and environment.

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[com.proxyiub.uits.iu.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ1122050&site=eds-live&scope=site](http://com.proxyiub.uits.iu.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ1122050&site=eds-live&scope=site)

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close

## Appendix A - Funds of knowledge graphic organizer

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Funds of Knowledge	
Home Language	E.g., Arabic; Spanish; Navajo; Italian
Family Values and Traditions	E.g., holiday celebrations; religious beliefs; work ethic
Caregiving	E.g., swaddling baby; giving baby pacifier; co-sleeping
Friends and Family	E.g., visiting grandma; barbecues; sports outings
Family Outings	E.g., shopping; beach; library; picnic
Household Chores	E.g., sweeping; dusting; doing dishes
Educational Activities	E.g., going to the museum; taking a walk in the neighborhood
Favorite TV Shows	E.g., watching Dora; Sesame Street; Sid the Science Kid
Family Occupations	E.g., fishing; office; construction; policeman
Scientific Knowledge	E.g., recycling; exercising; health
	Additional Funds of Knowledge

González, N., Moll, L., & Amanti, C. (Eds.). (2005). Funds of knowledge: Theorizing practices in households, communities and classrooms. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.



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## **Appendix B - Inquiry into curriculum**

These units use a project-based learning approach. I began using this approach with emergent bilinguals because it offers a way to scaffold instructions and one on one support in an environment where each student is reading and writing English at a different level. Using a PBL approach, students can work at their own pace and level, and I can use only a few minutes for instruction. Then, use the rest of the classroom time to conference or work with students one on one as they complete all project steps. In Nunez's (2018) research with emergent bilinguals, he found "PBL has provided significant benefits to ELs in the areas of academic engagement, mindset, confidence, sense of belonging, personal accountability to learning, and problem-solving skills." Lin's (2017) study shows similar results and increased motivation: "the PBL participants exhibited a significantly higher degree of active English learning attitude than the non-PBL participants in terms of motivation intensity and desire to learn English." The format for these units focuses on project-based learning. Most importantly, all units throughout the year focus on students telling stories about their life experiences, family, community, or culture (Gonzalez et al., 2005) to gain knowledge held by the students. The design of these projects is to help me learn about my students. Each project includes tenets of accompaniment (Sepulveda, 2011) due to Nour's call for a classroom community and incorporates aspects of family or culture due to the revelations of Ali based on the lessons I learned about using students' assets in curriculum while listening to my students. Additionally, I hope students learn about one another through these projects to build a culture of belonging (Sepulveda, 2011, p. 558) in our classroom.

### *August: Immigration Stories*

This unit design was a welcoming unit for students to tell stories about other migrants in the community. My hope for students was to make connections with stories of others in the community who have lived similar experiences. However, each year the students have instead told stories of family members or their classmates. Before creating their personal stories, students listened to immigration podcasts, read immigration stories, and watched examples of immigration stories while reflecting on their approach to the culminating project. This unit's culminating project is for students to create an immigration story by interviewing an immigrant. Students then shared stories in class. We held a viewing party where other teachers, aides, and principals came to watch the immigration stories and provide written feedback for each student.

To build community, students practice interviewing peers and write reflections stating what they learn from each student's presentation. The unit's overall focus is to highlight the life experiences of a family member or close friend. This unit aims to welcome students and begin to create "bridges between home and school" (Gay, 2018, p. 78) as we listen to the stories of one another.



## Immigration Project Design Overview

**Duration:** about three weeks

<b>Duration:</b> about three weeks	<b>Subject/Course:</b> English as a New Language Level 2
<b>Grade Level:</b> 10, 11	<b>Other subject areas to be included, if any:</b> NA
<b>Key Knowledge and Understanding</b> (CCSS or other standards)	<p><b>9-10.W.1</b> Write routinely over a variety of time frames for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences; apply reading standards to support analysis, reflection, and research by drawing evidence from literature and nonfiction texts.</p> <p><b>9-10 W.3.3.</b> Write narrative compositions in a variety of forms</p> <p><b>9-10.W.5</b> Conduct short as well as more sustained research assignments and tasks to build knowledge about the research process and the topic under study.</p>
<b>Project Summary</b>	Students will read, listen to, and research immigration stories; after each task, they will create a reflective journal focused on the driving question. Students will then create interview questions and practice with one another. Next, they will revise interview questions and then interview their immigrant. They will transcribe interviews; then create story outlines. Finally, stories will be created and then shared with an authentic audience.
<b>Driving Question</b>	What can writing and producing stories of immigrants teach us about one another?
<b>Entry Event</b>	Podcast/movie/reflective writing focused on immigration stories.
<b>Individual Products</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reflective writings</li> <li>● Listening comprehension questions</li> <li>● Double sides notes</li> <li>● Interview questions and transcriptions</li> <li>● Immigration stories</li> </ul>
<b>Team/Group Products</b>	Practice interviews and transcripts
<b>Specific content and success skills to be assessed</b>	Read, write, listen, and speak English

<b>Authentic Audience</b>	Stories will be shared with peers and invited teachers and administrators.
<b>Resources Needed</b>	<p>On-site people, facilities: iPad stand, library for recording/research purposes</p> <p>Equipment: iPad</p> <p>Materials: Embedded podcast "The Immigrant;" myimmigrationstory.com; double-sided note worksheet; CoCo movie and listening comprehension worksheet/essay prompts; iPad; interview notebook</p> <p>Community Resources: immigrant to interview (list of volunteers from the community)</p>

### Daily Unit Plan.

Day One:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Project Kickoff</li> <li>2. Embedded "The Immigrant" Podcast (Audio interview) <a href="https://one.npr.org/?sharedMediaId=475989404:475991009">https://one.npr.org/?sharedMediaId=475989404:475991009</a></li> <li>3. Listening comprehension questions</li> <li>4. Reflective writing – What did you learn about his family? What did you learn about immigration laws?</li> </ol>
Day Two:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Research and take notes (double-sided) on the following website/Blog: <a href="https://myimmigrationstory.com/">https://myimmigrationstory.com/</a></li> <li>2. Reflective writing – What did you learn about others? What did you learn about yourself?</li> <li>3. Choose one story to share with your peer and explain what you learned</li> <li>4. Begin Coco Movie and listening comprehension questions</li> </ol>
Day Three:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Coco Movie and listening comprehension questions Available on Teachers Pay Teachers: <a href="https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Coco-Movie-Guide-Questions-Google-Forms-PG-2017-The-Day-of-the-Dead-3590839">https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Coco-Movie-Guide-Questions-Google-Forms-PG-2017-The-Day-of-the-Dead-3590839</a></li> </ol>
Day Four:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Finish Coco movie</li> <li>2. Coco Essays</li> </ol>
Day Five:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Share Essays</li> <li>2. Reflective writing – What did you learn about immigration from this movie? What did you learn about yourself?</li> <li>3. Ellis Island Oral Immigration Stories <a href="https://www.nps.gov/elis/learn/historyculture/oral-histories.htm">https://www.nps.gov/elis/learn/historyculture/oral-histories.htm</a></li> <li>4. Pick two stories and write down the name, one important fact from each story, and what</li> </ol>

	<p>you learned from each story; share with a partner</p>
Day Six:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Watch digital scrapbooks on YouTube</li> <li>2. Use these examples or find 4 of your own: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Imad Charara <a href="https://youtu.be/Aa1EPHEjsEY">https://youtu.be/Aa1EPHEjsEY</a></li> <li>● Coming to America <a href="https://youtu.be/5PKk-1QE5yE">https://youtu.be/5PKk-1QE5yE</a></li> <li>● New Immigrants Share Their Stories <a href="https://youtu.be/33OINi3xVbc">https://youtu.be/33OINi3xVbc</a></li> <li>● Tan Le: My Immigration Story <a href="https://static.innovid.com/media/encoded/03_18/133771/7_source_52296_170273.mp4?jww=media&amp;r=1529584268333&amp;device_id=&amp;placement_hash=1gik7g">https://static.innovid.com/media/encoded/03_18/133771/7_source_52296_170273.mp4?jww=media&amp;r=1529584268333&amp;device_id=&amp;placement_hash=1gik7g</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Take Cornell or two-column notes on the stories. Instructions and format available here <a href="#">Cornell or Two Column Note Taking</a></li> <li>4. Decide format for your story (blog, digital story, digital scrapbook, podcast, Padlet, Prezi, Inspiration board (Dreamboard), etc.)</li> </ol>
Day Seven:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. As a class read: Step By Step Guide to writing a profile <a href="https://thewritelife.com/writing-a-profile-story/">https://thewritelife.com/writing-a-profile-story/</a></li> <li>2. Create 20 interview questions you would like to ask using tips from this article</li> <li>3. Interview a peer</li> </ol>
Day Eight:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Finish Peer Interviews</li> <li>2. Transcribe</li> <li>3. Revise questions (did you add questions? Take away questions? Have you thought of a better question?)</li> </ol>

Day Nine:	Interview/planning/conferencing day
Day Ten:	Write Profile and Interview Questions and Answers/Conferencing
Day Eleven:	Write Profile and Interview Questions and Answers/Conferencing
Day Twelve:	Final touches on immigration stories
Day Thirteen:	<p>Stories due</p> <p>Write a reflection to your peers' story and the driving question.</p> <p>What do you hope others will learn based on your story?</p>

**Handouts (not linked from other sources).**

*Handout #1/ Day 1 Listening Comprehension Questions*

“The Immigrant” Podcast

Link to transcript: <https://www.npr.org/2016/04/30/476064078/when-immigrants-commit-crimes-they-can-be-punished-twice>

Please answer each question in a complete sentence:

1. What question, question No. 38, was asked in 2012 by the judge in Newton County, Georgia?

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2. Why was Shawn arrested?

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3. How many months did Shawn serve?

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4. What two justice systems must noncitizens, or citizens who entered the country legally, face?

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5. What percentage of immigrants lose their cases in Lumpkin, Ga.?

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6. What is the name of the Obama administration’s immigration agenda?

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7. Who is Shawn’s lawyer?

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8. Why don't immigrants in deportation proceedings get the same protections as people facing criminal charges?

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9. What is the name of the detention center where Shawn is held in Lumpkin, GA?

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10. What will happen if Shawn loses his case?

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11. What was Shawn's excuse for pleading guilty to possession with intent to distribute?

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Reflective writing – (3 to 4 sentence response for each question)

What did you learn about his family? What did you learn about immigration laws?

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*Handout #2: Introduction and for use during final presentation*

**Rubric for Immigration Story:**

You will be creating a story presentation to demonstrate the history/story of an immigrant.

**Objective:** Create a story using text, images, videos, and graphics that highlight an immigrant and their story. Demonstrate knowledge of gathering and citing information from technology resources.

**Driving Question:** What can writing and producing stories of immigrants teach us about one another?

Your story will need the following:

- An introduction and conclusion with a picture and narration
- At least ten different “moments” to comprise your story – you will have to interview the person to highlight exceptional “moments” in their life.
- An image or video used to represent each of the moments where appropriate
- At least five pieces of additional information about the person or something they have accomplished/achieved in life.
- Dates will be needed to help tell the immigration story.
- Narration for your interactive timeline to pull all of the information together into a coherent story



Grade: \_\_\_\_\_/65

**Digital Tools Demonstration**

Item Description	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Introduction/ Conclusion	5 – An introduction and conclusion are included	4 – An introduction or conclusion is included		2 – An introduction and conclusion are not included
Moments Included	20 – At least 10 moments or more included	18 – Between 8-9 moments included	15 – Between 6-7 moments included	10 – Less than 6 moments included
Images	5 – Images are included on <b>all</b> moments (aside from video moments)	4 – Images are included on <b>some</b> moments (aside from video moments)	5 – Images are included on a <b>few</b> moments (aside from video moments)	5 – Images are not included on the moments (aside from video moments)
Pieces of Additional Information	5 – 5 or more pieces of information are used to provide additional information	4 – 3-4 pieces of information are used to provide additional information	3 – 1-2 pieces of information are used to provide additional information	2 – No pieces of information are used to provide additional information

**Research Knowledge**

History/story of person	10 – The moments used to describe the person's history/story are <b>exceptional</b> and add to the overall timeline	8 – The moments used to describe the person's history/story are <b>good</b> and add to the overall timeline	6 – The moments used to describe the person's history/story are <b>fair</b> and <b>may or may not</b> add to the timeline	4 – The moments used to describe the person's history/story are <b>poor</b> and <b>may or may not</b> add to the timeline
Dates and Locations	5 – Dates and locations are used to provide <b>exceptional</b> information about the history/story	4 – Dates and locations are used to provide <b>good</b> information about the history/story	3 – Dates and locations are used to provide <b>fair</b> information about the history/story	2 – Dates and locations <b>may or may not</b> be used to provide information about the history/story
Credible information	5 – The information provided is from <u>credible</u> , reliable, and from the interview you conducted.	4 – The information provided may or may not be from credible, reliable, OR from the interview you conducted.		2 – The information provided is not from credible, reliable, OR from the interview you conducted.
Accurate/factual information	5 – The information provided is accurate/factual	4 – The information provided may or may not be accurate/factual		2 – The information provided is not accurate/factual

***Oral and Written Communication Demonstration***

Narration	5– Narration is used to <b>coherently</b> tie the history/story together	4 – Narration is used to tie the history/story together	3 – Narration <b>may or may not</b> be used to tie the history/story together	2 – Narration is not used to tie the history/story together
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***September- October: Artifactual Literacy Project paired with graphic novel - To Kill a Mockingbird***

Our school chooses the novels each grade level reads in all English courses through a professional learning community format. Many of these novels have been in place at each grade level for several years. My students read the same novels, although often we read the graphic novel version and practice English with words and visuals, as we interact with the same texts students’ peers read in English language arts courses. Therefore, we paired the graphic novel of *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Fordham et al., 2018) with an artifactual literacy project. Within this text, Scout and Jem find artifacts in a tree crafted by Boo Radley. Boo creates these artifacts based on his observations of the children. The artifact scene is about halfway through the novel, and my students needed a distraction from the monotony of reading a challenging story each day in class. They were reporting weariness as they read the beginning of the novel.

Consequently, as I was teaching this novel, I read an article about artifactual literacy in an English language arts classroom (DeJaynes, 2018). I wondered if students were sharing “culture” and “heritage” in the cosmopolitan framework the author used for these projects (DeJaynes, 2018), what could I learn about student’s funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992) through artifacts as both “culture” and “heritage” are tenets of the funds of knowledge theory. Therefore, I used the idea from DeJaynes (2018) article as a tie to the artifacts Boo created in the

book. Students created an artifactual literacy story based on the artifact guide in the U.S. National Archives “Analyze an Artifact” website (2018). The goal of this project was to learn about my students’ life experiences, family, community, and culture (Gonzalez et al., 2005) as they described an item and its importance to them. To incorporate community, students shared written and oral reflections about each project and item. The artifactual literacy projects helped to build “cultural knowledge” (Gay, 2018, p. 77) about one another, and created an opportunity to hear about one another’s “prior experiences” (Gay, 2018, p. 77).

#### **Artifactual Literacy Project Design Overview.**

<b>Duration: 1 week</b>	<b>Subject/Course: English as a New Language Level 2</b>
<b>Grade Level: 10, 11</b>	<b>Other subject areas to be included, if any: NA</b>
<b>Key Knowledge and Understanding</b> (CCSS or other standards)	<p><b>9-10.SL.4.1</b></p> <p>Present information, findings, and supporting evidence logically so that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, ensuring organization and development are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.</p> <p><b>9-10.SL.4.2</b></p> <p>Create engaging presentations that make strategic and creative use of digital media (<i>e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements</i>) to enhance audience understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence.</p>
<b>Project Summary</b>	Students will begin with an artifact that is important to them or their families. They will describe the object using the National Archives guide. They will also

	explain how this artifact is important in their lives. Students will present this information to the class as their peers write reflections about what they learned about the student presenting and their artifact.
<b>Driving Question</b>	What can we learn about one another's culture, heritage, or family through artifacts?
<b>Entry Event</b>	Teacher created artifact presentation
<b>Individual Products</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Artifact presentation</li> <li>• Reflection of each presentation given in class by other students</li> </ul>
<b>Team/Group Products</b>	NA
<b>Specific content and success skills to be assessed</b>	Read, write, listen, and speak English
<b>Authentic Audience</b>	Stories will be shared with peers and invited teachers and administrators.
<b>Resources Needed</b>	<p>Equipment: iPad; Apple TV for presentation</p> <p>Materials: Analyze an Artifact website; Reflection sheet</p>

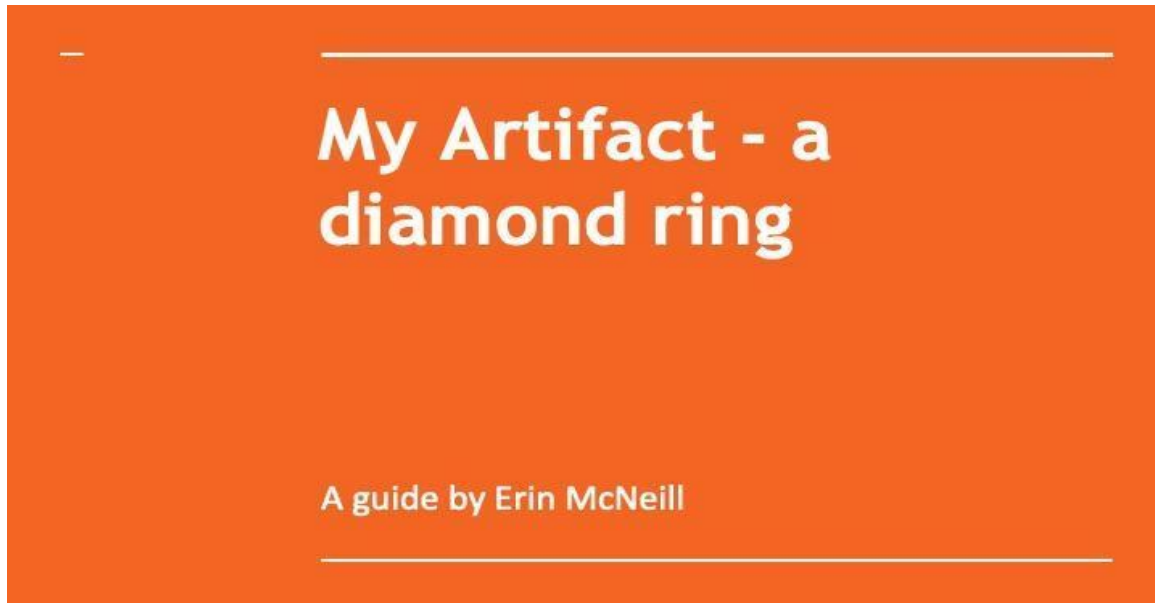
## Daily Unit Plan.

Day One:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Introduction to project</li><li>2. Review "Analyze and Artifact" website <a href="https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/artifact.html">https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/artifact.html</a></li><li>3. Review project rubric</li><li>4. Teacher presentation of artifact</li><li>5. Students 'grade' teacher presentation</li></ol>
Day Two:	Project Work Day - must bring in artifact or pictures of artifact
Day Three:	Project Work Day
Day Four:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Student presentations</li></ol> <p>Peers write three to four-sentence reflections about each artifact presentation choosing at least one of these questions to answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ What did you learn from this story?</li><li>■ What experiences have you had that are similar?</li><li>■ What was important about this person's artifact? Why?</li><li>■ Ask your own questions about the artifact or focus on feedback for a</li></ul>

	<p>different part of the presentation.</p> <p>2. Students write a reflection answering the question: What do you want those viewing your story to learn?</p>
Day Five:	<p>1. Finish presentations</p> <p>2. Peer reflections copied and given to each student.</p>

**Handouts and Teacher Presentation (not linked from other sources).**

Teacher Presentation



## Meet the artifact

The ring is made out of gold and diamonds. .



## 1. Description

→ **Small**

The ring is approximately 1 inch by 1 inch.

→ **Shape**

The ring is a dome shape with a round diamond in the middle. All around the middle diamond are smaller diamonds

→ **Age**

The ring is well taken care of and looks new. However, I would describe the style as old fashioned as you don't usually see diamond rings that are dome shaped.

—  
**Where is it from?**

**It was originally an engagement ring from my first husband, John. I had it remade when he passed away.**



Ellis Jewelers in  
Seymour, IN remade  
the ring for me.



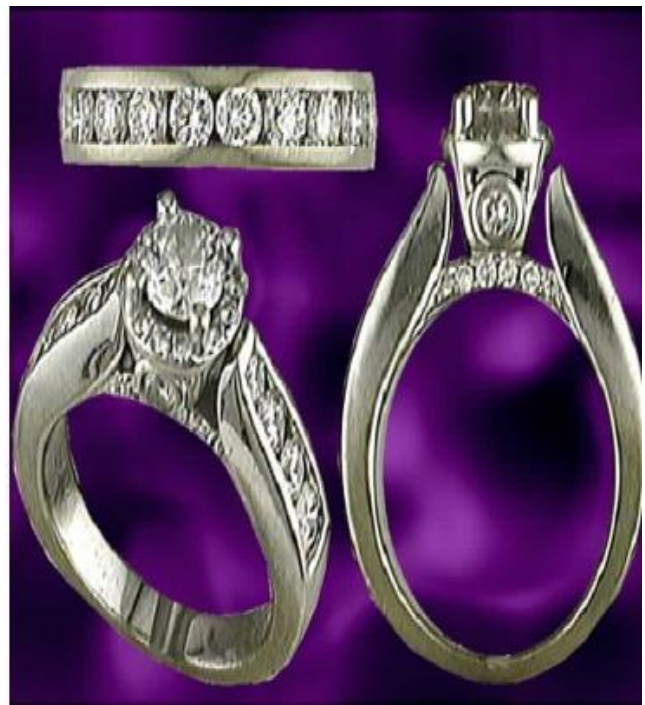
## When is it from?

We got married June 19, 2010.

I had the ring remade in June of 2013.

Who used it? What was it used for?

- I used it first as a wedding band and engagement ring.
- Now I use it as a ring on my right hand.
- This picture is in its original form.



What does this tell you about the people who used it?

- They were happy and married.
- It also shows that they are no longer married because the ring has been made into something else.

**John K. Poyner**  
March 03, 2012

**JOHN'S OBITUARY**

Mr. John K. Poyner, age 30, of Hanover, Indiana entered this life on January 23, 1982, in Princeton, Indiana. He was the loving son of William "Bill" and Susan Jo Setty Poyner. He was raised in Fort Branch, Indiana and was a 2000 graduate of Gibson Southern High School where he was a star baseball player and had served as the pitcher. During his childhood John had been a member of the Boy Scouts, played American Legion Baseball and coached the Fort Branch Babe Ruth League. He was a 2000 graduate of the University of Southern Indiana in Evansville with a degree in business management. John was united in marriage to Erin Kaye Gerth on June 18, 2010 at the City Falls State Park in Madison, Indiana. He was employed with Sherwin Williams Company since 2005 and had worked in Evansville for the Green River Road store and was currently the manager at the Madison store. John loved his dogs, Milton & Maggie. He was an avid Seattle Mariners fan, enjoyed riding 4-wheelers, target shooting and working with kids. John passed away suddenly due to injuries sustained in the tornadoes that struck near Chelsea, Indiana on Friday at 3:30 p.m. at his residence. A LUTHERAN SERVICE will be missed by his loving wife Erin Kaye Gerth Poyner of Hanover, Indiana, his loving parents William "Bill" and Susan Jo Setty Poyner of Fort Branch, Indiana, his loving sister Jaymie Jackson and her husband, Mike of Avon, Indiana, his adoring nephews & his nieces Maxwell Jackson, Delaney Jackson, and Addison Jackson; his loving father in law & mother in law Walter and Wilma Gerth of North Vernon, Indiana; his aunts & uncles Wayne and Rita Poyner of New Johnsonville, Tennessee, Allen Poyner of New Johnsonville, Tennessee, Michael & Karen Poyner of New Johnsonville, Tennessee, Mary & Larry Hays of North Vernon, Indiana; several cousins and other relatives. He was preceded in death by his grandparents, William Knox and Roberta Ann Poyner; John and Martina Setty; his aunt, Nancy Poyner Johnson. **FUNERAL CEREMONY** Funeral services will be conducted Monday, March 5, 2012 at 7:00 p.m., by Rev. Beth Walsten Fisher, Rev. Karina Palkch-Bundy, Pastor Kevin Morgan at Morgan &

What can you find out from this artifact that you may not learn anywhere else?

My husband passed away in the tornadoes in Hanover, Indiana in March of 2012. He was 30 years old.

I lost him, my home, my dogs, and all of my belongings.

[6577877](#)

## How does this artifact shape who I am?

- It reminds me how important it is to have friends and family.
- It reminds me of my faith in God.
- It reminds me that life goes on.
- It reminds me to spend time with my family.
- It reminds me that grief and sadness are different for everyone.



### Artifactual Literacy Assignment Rubric

- The PARTS of the artifact effectively described using at least **two** elements from the artifact guide.

\_\_\_\_\_/5

- The PARTS of the artifact effectively described using at least **two** elements the artifact guide.

\_\_\_\_\_/5

- MAKING SENSE of the artifact is effectively described by answering at least **four** questions from the artifact guide.

\_\_\_\_\_/10

- HISTORICAL EVIDENCE of the artifact is effectively described by answering at least one of the artifact guides' questions.

\_\_\_\_\_/5

- Grammar and spelling are correct

\_\_\_\_\_/5

- At least 2 pictures are included

\_\_\_\_\_/5

- The student speaks loudly and clearly

\_\_\_\_\_/5

- Gives 8 – 10 ways this artifact shapes who you are, what you think, and/or what you believe due to the artifact or the events surrounding the artifact

\_\_\_\_\_/ 10

Total \_\_\_\_\_/50

## Peer reflection sheet

Answer at least one of these questions in three to four sentences about each presentation:

- What did you learn from this story?
- What experiences have you had that are similar?
- What was important about this person's artifact? Why?
- Ask your own questions about the artifact or focus on feedback for a different part of the presentation.

Write a reflection about your own presentation answering the question: What do you want those viewing your story to learn?

*November/December: Research paper - focus on family, community, life experiences, or culture - Argumentative*

Another major unit in sophomore and junior English courses, as determined by our professional learning community, is an argumentative research essay. However, other English classes focus on a predetermined list of topics for students. In my classroom, we complete the same unit, but we work to find a topic that focuses on funds of knowledge indicators:

- Life experiences, family, community, and culture (Gonzalez et al., 2005)
- Household knowledge (trade, business, finance) (Moll et al., 1992, p.133)
- Learning motivated by the child's interests (Moll et al., 1992, p.134)

Using these indicators, I created a survey for students to brainstorm topic ideas with their parents and family members before picking a topic. My students must also write a reflection about why they chose this topic and what they hope to learn. As for the research paper format, we follow a research writing portfolio unit plan designed by The Superhero Teacher (Wheaton, 2018). This resource is editable, allowing for accommodations if needed. Additionally, the unit plan allows for conferences with the teacher every other day to check each student's progress and help find resources or ideas the students may need. These one-on-one conversations with each student can also create opportunities to learn about my students' needs and assets as we work to create an environment in our classroom of fellowship and engagement with one another (Sepulveda, 2011, p. 561). Students are also encouraged to work with one another in brainstorming ideas and peer editing drafts as they work toward building positive relationships (Sepulveda, 2011).

## Research Project Design Overview.

<b>Duration: 6 weeks</b>	<b>Subject/Course: English as a New Language Level 2</b>
<b>Grade Level: 10, 11</b>	<b>Other subject areas to be included, if any: NA</b>
<b>Key Knowledge and Understanding</b> (CCSS or other standards)	<p><b>9-10.W.3.1</b></p> <p>Write <b>arguments</b> in a variety of forms that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Introduce claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.</li> <li>● Use rhetorical strategies to enhance the effectiveness of the claim</li> <li>● Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns.</li> <li>● Use effective transitions to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.</li> <li>● Establish and maintain a consistent style and tone appropriate to purpose and audience.</li> <li>● Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.</li> </ul>
<b>Project Summary</b>	<p>Students will begin by interviewing a family member and brainstorming possible topics. They will then write a reflection about why they chose this topic. Next, we will begin researching and creating an annotated bibliography and rough draft. Students will peer edit one another's work before creating a final draft.</p>

<b>Driving Question</b>	What can we learn about one another's knowledge and assets through research?
<b>Entry Event</b>	Family interview and brainstorming activity
<b>Individual Products</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topic reflection</li> <li>• Topic and subtopic sheet</li> <li>• Source sheet</li> <li>• Annotated Bibliography</li> <li>• Outline</li> <li>• Rough Draft</li> <li>• Final Draft</li> <li>• Presentation of Research</li> </ul>
<b>Team/Group Products</b>	Peer edits
<b>Specific content and success skills to be assessed</b>	Read, write, listen, and speak English
<b>Authentic Audience</b>	Presentations will be shared in class and with families.
<b>Resources Needed</b>	<p>Equipment: iPad; Apple TV for presentation</p> <p>Materials: family interview and brainstorming sheet; Other resources available from various writing resources or the Research writing portfolio available from The Superhero Teacher (Wheaton, 2018). <a href="https://thesuperheroteacher.com">https://thesuperheroteacher.com</a></p>



### Daily Unit Plan.

Day One:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Project Kickoff</li> <li>2. Review Family interview and brainstorming handout</li> <li>3. Pass out research portfolios</li> <li>4. Review due dates and rubric</li> </ol>
Day Two:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conference with the teacher concerning the family interview and topic selection</li> <li>2. Write a reflective essay about topic choices (in Research Writing Portfolio)</li> </ol>
Day Three:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work on Topic and Subtopic sheet in Research portfolio - outlining ideas for research paper</li> </ol>
Day Four:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Topic and subtopic sheet due</li> </ol>
Day Five:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Begin seven sources sheet - finding sources, note-taking, determining the usefulness of sources</li> </ol>
Day Six:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work on seven sources sheet</li> <li>2. Conferences with teacher</li> </ol>
Day Seven:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 7 sources sheet due</li> </ol>
Day Eight:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Begin working on Annotated Bibliography</li> </ol>
Day Nine:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work on Annotated Bibliography</li> <li>2. Conferences with teacher</li> </ol>
Day Ten:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Annotated Bibliography due</li> </ol>
Day Eleven:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create an outline</li> <li>2. Conference with teacher</li> </ol>
Day Twelve:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Outline due</li> </ol>

Day Thirteen:	1. Begin work on the rough draft 2. Conference with teacher
Day Fourteen:	1. Work on the rough draft
Day Fifteen:	1. Rough Draft due 2. Conference with teacher
Day Sixteen:	1. Peer edit
Day Seventeen:	1. Begin work on the final draft 2. Conference with teacher
Day Eighteen:	1. Work on final draft and presentation of findings
Day Nineteen:	1. Final Draft due 2. Work on presentation 3. Conference with teacher
Day Twenty:	1. Presentations 2. Write peer reflection about each presentation

### **Handouts (not linked from other sources).**

#### Family Interview and Brainstorming for Research topic

Directions: You must answer the following questions in complete sentences. Then, you will interview a parent or family member using the same questions. Tomorrow during class, we will use the answer to these questions to brainstorm research topics.

1. What is a topic that interests you or your family? Why?
2. What lived experiences do you have, or members of your family have that are different than others? What research topics could come from these experiences?
3. What do you want to know about your cultural background or heritage? What research topics could you explore?
4. What laws or policies have affected you or your family? Could you research these laws or policies? Why or Why not?
5. What are the essential traditions in your community? Can you research these traditions?
6. What knowledge does your household have (like trade, business, finance) (Moll et al., 1992, p.133)? Is this something you would like to study? Why or why not?
7. What is a topic that you are interested in that would fit with the goals of this project?

#### Teacher conference questions

How is your project going?  
What is going well?

What is hard?  
What do you need help with?  
Are there any issues?  
What strategies have you used to work through this issue?  
How were you feeling when writing this part?  
What can I do to support you?  
Are there any resources you need that you don't have access to?

## Research paper Peer Edit

### Introduction

1. Is there a beginning that will catch the reader's attention? \_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_ No
  2. What is the topic of the introduction paragraph?
- 

3. Highlight the sentence you believe to be the thesis statement.
  4. What do you think this paper will argue after reading the first paragraph?
- 

### Body Paragraphs (do this for each paragraph)

1. Highlight the topic sentence.
  2. What is the topic of the paragraph?
- 

3. Is there a quote used in the paragraph? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No
4. Is there a sentence immediately after the quote which proves or back up the claim made in the topic sentence?  
\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No
5. Underline any sentences that you had trouble reading or understanding.
6. Are there two quotes (or a quote and paraphrased information in the paragraph)?  
\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No
7. Is there a sentence immediately after the quote which proves or back up the claim made in the topic sentence?  
\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

### Body Paragraphs (complete all steps for each paragraph)

1. Highlight the topic sentence.
  2. What is the topic of the paragraph?
- 

3. Is there a quote used in the paragraph? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No
4. Is there a sentence immediately after the quote which proves or back up the claim made in the topic sentence?  
\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

5. Underline any sentences that you had trouble reading or understanding.
6. Are there two quotes (or a quote and paraphrased information in the paragraph)?  
\_\_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_\_No
7. Is there a sentence immediately after the quote which proves or back up the claim made in the topic sentence?  
\_\_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_\_No

Body Paragraphs (complete all steps for each paragraph)

1. Highlight the topic sentence.
  2. What is the topic of the paragraph?
- 

3. Is there a quote used in the paragraph? \_\_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_\_No
4. Is there a sentence immediately after the quote which proves or back up the claim made in the topic sentence?  
\_\_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_\_No
5. Underline any sentences that you had trouble reading or understanding.
6. Are there two quotes (or a quote and paraphrased information in the paragraph)?  
\_\_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_\_No
7. Is there a sentence immediately after the quote which proves or back up the claim made in the topic sentence?  
\_\_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_\_No

Body Paragraphs (complete all steps for each paragraph)

1. Highlight the topic sentence.
  2. What is the topic of the paragraph?
- 

3. Is there a quote used in the paragraph? \_\_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_\_No
4. Is there a sentence immediately after the quote which proves or back up the claim made in the topic sentence?  
\_\_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_\_No
5. Underline any sentences that you had trouble reading or understanding.
6. Are there two quotes (or a quote and paraphrased information in the paragraph)?  
\_\_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_\_No
7. Is there a sentence immediately after the quote which proves or back up the claim made in the topic sentence?  
\_\_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_\_No

Conclusion

1. Are the main points restated?  
\_\_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_\_No
2. Is there new information introduced?  
\_\_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_\_No

### Peer reflections

Answer at least one of these questions for each student's presentation. Remember to include the student's name and to write at least three sentences:

- What did you learn from this research presentation?
- What knowledge did you hold about this subject before this presentation?
- What was important about this person's research and presentation? Why?
- Ask your own questions about the presentation or focus on feedback for a different part of the presentation.

### January/February: Funds of Knowledge Memoir

The first several weeks of January require mandated WIDA testing for every emergent bilingual. I give this test in my English course. Therefore, we only spend a few days in January with actual instructional time. Although this is a short unit, it takes over a month of classroom time due to testing. For this writing task, students create a memoir based on their families and funds of knowledge. These memoirs incorporate all tenets of funds of knowledge by asking students to remember and describe parts of their lives that include: life experiences, family, community, and culture (Gonzalez et al., 2005) or learning household knowledge (Moll et al., 1992, p.133). This unit begins by providing students with a funds of knowledge graphic organizer (Park & Lit, 2015). The students will then choose at least two of the tenets described in the organizer to explain how this connects to their families' memories. They will then describe how they see this knowledge in their everyday social experiences. Each student will produce an essay of three to four pages following a narrative writing format. These essays serve as an assignment based on culturally relevant teaching to learn about my students and the experiences they have encountered. These memoirs could reveal funds of knowledge held by my students. In a study by Handsfield and Valente (2016), they used a memoir to discover epistemic privilege

and funds of knowledge of their students. This project also contains spaces for students to work together in a classroom community as they work in groups on anchor texts, peer edit, and conference with me throughout the unit.

### **Memoir Project Design Overview.**

<b>Duration: about 3 weeks</b>	<b>Subject/Course: English as a New Language Level 2</b>
<b>Grade Level: 10, 11</b>	<b>Other subject areas to be included, if any: NA</b>
<b>Key Knowledge and Understanding</b> (CCSS or other standards)	<p><b>9-10.W.3.3</b></p> <p>Write <b>narrative</b> compositions in a variety of forms that–</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters.</li> <li>● Create a smooth progression of experiences or events.</li> <li>● Use narrative techniques, (<i>e.g., dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plotlines</i>),to develop experiences, events, and/or characters. events, setting, and/or characters.</li> <li>● Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole.</li> <li>● Use precise words and phrases,telling details,and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.</li> <li>● Provide an ending that follows from and reflects on what is experienced,observed,or resolved over the course of the narrative.</li> </ul>
<b>Project Summary</b>	Students will begin by completing a Funds of

	<p>knowledge graphic organizer (Park and Lit, 2015). Next, students will read a mentor text and answer questions about the author's writing style. Students will conference with the teacher about a possible memoir topic based on the Funds of knowledge graphic organizer. If students still need help, another idea generating graphic organizer will be used from Teach Between the Lines Memoir Unit (Taylor). After finding a topic we will narrow the topic by detailing the important details of the timeline. Finally, students will create a rough draft, peer edit, revise, and publish their memoir to our class discussion forum. Students will write reflections to one another via the discussion forum.</p>
<b>Driving Question</b>	What can we learn about one another's knowledge and experiences through memoirs?
<b>Entry Event</b>	Funds of knowledge graphic organizer and mentor text example
<b>Individual Products</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funds of knowledge graphic organizer</li> <li>• Style questions based on mentor texts</li> <li>• Memoir topic graphic organizer (if struggling with topic selection)</li> <li>• Timeline and details organizer</li> <li>• Rough Draft</li> <li>• Final Draft</li> </ul>
<b>Team/Group Products</b>	Peer edits and reflections
<b>Specific content and success skills to be assessed</b>	Read, write, listen, and speak English
<b>Authentic Audience</b>	Final drafts will be shared in an online discussion forum for peer reflection and feedback.
<b>Resources Needed</b>	<p>Equipment: iPad; Apple TV for presentation</p> <p>Materials: Funds of knowledge graphic organizer; Other resources available from various writing resources or "Writing the Memoir" lesson plans from Teach Between the Lines (Taylor).  <a href="https://www.teachbetweenthelines.org">https://www.teachbetweenthelines.org</a></p>

### Daily Unit Plan.

Day One:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Project Kickoff</li> <li>2. Funds of Knowledge graphic organizer (Park and Lit, 2015).</li> <li>3. Read Mentor text; excerpt from <i>I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings</i> (Angelou, 1969)</li> </ol>
Day Two:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete style sheet based on mentor text <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- handouts from this unit are available via Teach Between the Lines (Taylor) or other various writing websites</li> <li>- Work in groups to complete analysis</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Conference with the teacher concerning the graphic organizer and topic selection</li> <li>3. Idea generator graphic organizer, in needed</li> </ol>
Day Three:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work on timeline and details</li> </ol>
Day Four:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work on timeline and details</li> <li>2. Conference with the teacher</li> </ol>
Day Five:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Begin rough draft</li> </ol>
Day Six:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work on rough draft</li> <li>2. Conferences with teacher</li> </ol>
Day Seven:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rough draft</li> <li>2. Peer edit</li> </ol>
Day Eight:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Begin working on Final draft</li> </ol>
Day Nine:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work on final draft</li> <li>2. Conferences with teacher</li> </ol>
Day Ten:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Post final draft to discussion board</li> <li>2. Write reflections to peer's memoirs</li> </ol>



## Handouts (not linked from other sources).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Funds of Knowledge</b>	
Home Language	E.g., Arabic; Spanish; Navajo; Italian
Family Values and Traditions	E.g., holiday celebrations; religious beliefs; work ethic
Caregiving	E.g., swaddling baby; giving baby pacifier; co-sleeping
Friends and Family	E.g., visiting grandma; barbecues; sports outings
Family Outings	E.g., shopping; beach; library; picnic
Household Chores	E.g., sweeping; dusting; doing dishes
Educational Activities	E.g., going to the museum; taking a walk in the neighborhood
Favorite TV Shows	E.g., watching Dora; Sesame Street; Sid the Science Kid
Family Occupations	E.g., fishing; office; construction; policeman
Scientific Knowledge	E.g., recycling; exercising; health
	Additional Funds of Knowledge

González, N., Moll, L., & Amanti, C. (Eds.). (2005). Funds of knowledge: Theorizing practices in households, communities and classrooms. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.



Bank Street College | NCCLR@bankstreet.edu | Toll Free: 888.246.1975  
 Education Development Center, Inc. | NCCLRinfo@edc.org | Toll Free: 855.494.0331  
<http://eckic.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hsic/ita-system/cultural-linguistic>



Teacher conference questions  
 How is your project going?  
 What is going well?  
 What is hard?

What do you need help with?  
Are there any issues?  
What strategies have you used to work through this issue?  
How were you feeling when writing this part?  
What can I do to support you?  
Are there any resources you need that you don't have access to?

#### Peer Edit Memoir

1. Is this essay about one moment or event in the writer's life? \_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No
2. In one sentence, explain the moment or event. If there is more than one event, write that as well.

- 
3. Highlight any sentences that seem to be off topic.
  4. Draw a line where the beginning ends and write "beginning."
  5. Draw a line where the middle of the story begins and ends and write "middle."
  6. Draw a line where the ending starts and write "ending."
  7. Underline any sentences that were hard for you to understand.
  8. Is there dialogue used? \_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No
  9. Do they use a lot of details? \_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No
  10. Is there any part of the essay that is not written in first person, if so, circle the area where the pronouns are not first person.

(First person pronouns: I, me, mine, myself, we, us, our, ourselves.

Second person pronouns: You, your, yourself

Third person pronouns: he, him, his, himself, she, her, hers, herself, it, its, itself, they, them, their, theirs, and themselves.)

Grammarly has a great blog post about this if you need more information;

<https://www.grammarly.com/blog/first-second-and-third-person/>

***March/ April: Personal Values Code of Conduct paired with Lord of the Flies (Golding, 1954).***

Another text sophomores read in our school is *The Lord of the Flies*. The professional learning community has also chosen this book and designed the curriculum to go along with it. My students do not read the graphic novel but complete the same assignments and read the same texts as their sophomore peers. However, my classroom adds one project designed to reveal the personal values of students and their families. At the end of the first three chapters, the characters

in the story have created some island rules and jobs for one another. After discussing the rules the characters have created and the power divisions in the novel, my students create a present a personal values code of conduct and presentation that explains how they would conduct themselves ethically. The students grapple with what would be most important to them and why when creating rules for society. They share their ideas and findings with the class before completing their code of conduct to seek feedback and validate their ideas and identities through conversations with one another (Sepulveda, 2011, p. 551). Students must reflect on what is most important in their lives and how they would uphold knowledges or traditions essential in their lives. This project is a chance to consider learning to be in a community with others by “knowing, valuing, doing, caring, sharing power” (Gay, 2018, p. 61).

#### **Code of Conduct Project Design Overview.**

<b>Duration: about one week</b>	<b>Subject/Course: English as a New Language Level 2</b>
<b>Grade Level: 10, 11</b>	<b>Other subject areas to be included, if any: NA</b>
<b>Key Knowledge and Understanding</b> (CCSS or other standards)	<p>9-10.SL.2.2 Examine, analyze, and reflect on ideas under discussion, by providing textual evidence in order to support or refute those ideas.</p> <p>9-10.SL.2.3</p>

	<p>Work with peers to establish norms for collegial discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and individual roles as needed</p> <p>9-10.SL.4.2</p> <p>Create engaging presentations that make strategic and creative use of digital media (<i>e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements</i>) to enhance audience understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence.</p>
<b>Project Summary</b>	<p>Students will begin by looking at other codes of conduct with a partner. They will follow the teacher guide by Penguin (Mayer, 2013) that leads them to read <i>The Boy Scout Creed</i>, <i>The Ten Commandments</i>, and <i>All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten</i>. They will discuss the essential elements of each code and share their findings with the class. Next, they will create their code starting with a graphic organizer. Students will present the code to the class and explain why they added each element.</p>
<b>Driving Question</b>	<p>What can we learn about one another's knowledge and experiences through behavior codes?</p>
<b>Entry Event</b>	<p>Reading other codes of conduct</p>
<b>Individual Products</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Code of conduct graphic organizer</li> <li>● Code of conduct presentation</li> <li>● Code of conduct Reflections</li> </ul>
<b>Team/Group Products</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Significant ideas reflection sheet about the following anchor texts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Boy Scout Creed</li> <li>○ The Ten Commandments</li> <li>○ All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Specific content and success skills</b>	<p>Read, write, listen, and speak English</p>

<b>to be assessed</b>	
<b>Authentic Audience</b>	Presentations will be shared with the class and discussed.
<b>Resources Needed</b>	<p>Equipment: iPad; Apple TV for presentation</p> <p>Materials: Significant ideas reflection sheet, anchor text, code of conduct graphic organizer, code of conduct reflection sheet.</p>

### **Daily Unit Plan.**

Day One:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Project Kickoff</li> <li>2. Read anchor texts in the teacher guide by Penguin (Mayer, 2013)</li> <li>3. Complete the significant ideas sheet</li> <li>4. Share findings with the class</li> </ol>
Day Two:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete code of conduct graphic organizer</li> <li>2. Begin working on code of conduct presentation</li> </ol>
Day Three:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work on code of conduct presentation</li> <li>2. Conference with the teacher</li> </ol>
Day Four:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Presentations</li> <li>2. Reflection of peers presentations</li> </ol>

### **Handouts (not linked from other sources).**

#### Significant ideas in Code of Conduct

1. Highlight words that appear several times. What words are used often?
2. Summarize the main idea of each commandment or rule in one sentence.

3. Are these ideas the expected behavior in society today? Why or Why not?
4. What would you take out?
5. What would you add?

#### Code of Conduct Planning Sheet

What are my core values? Explain why each of these values is important.	What do I expect of myself?	What do I expect of others?
		Family?
	Physically?	Friends?
		Acquaintances?
	Emotionally?	
	Mentally?	

Presentation Rubric

Required Elements	Exceptional	Average	Below Average	Not Addressed
Ten principles or rules and rationale	<b>20</b> List of ten principles is easy to understand and explanations are provided of why each principle is important.	<b>15</b> List of six-eight principles is easy to understand and explanations are provided of why each principle is important.	<b>10</b> Several principles are not present, they are hard to understand or no explanations provided.	<b>5</b> Missing the requirements.
Grammar, Spelling and Punctuation	<b>10</b> Language is clear. Grammar and spelling rules are followed.	<b>8</b> A few parts of the presentation are unclear or some grammar and spelling rules aren't followed.	<b>6</b> Most of the presentation is unclear or most grammar and spelling rules aren't followed.	<b>4</b> No effort to proofread
Content and organization	<b>10</b> Structure of the presentation is easy to follow. Each principle is clearly explained and understandable.	<b>8</b> Structure of presentation is hard to follow at times. Some principles may not be clearly explained or understandable.	<b>6</b> Structure of presentation is hard to follow most of the time. Most principles may not be clearly explained or understandable.	<b>4</b> Not able to understand organizational structure.
Presentation Skills	<b>10</b> Presenter makes eye contact with the audience, speaks loudly and clearly, and engages the audience.	<b>8</b> Presenter is missing one of these elements: makes eye contact with the audience, speaks loudly and clearly, and engages the audience.	<b>6</b> Presenter is missing two of these elements: makes eye contact with the audience, speaks loudly and clearly, and engages the audience.	<b>4</b> Presenter is missing all of these elements: makes eye contact with the audience, speaks loudly and clearly, and engages the audience.

## Peer reflection sheet

Answer at least one of these questions in three to four sentences about each presentation:

- What did you learn about your peer's values from this presentation?
- What ideas or values do you have that are similar?
- Which principle was the most important? Why?
- Ask questions about the presentation or focus on feedback for a different part of the presentation.

Write a reflection about your presentation answering the question: What do you want those viewing your presentation to learn about your values?

*May: Funds of Knowledge Informative Essay and demonstration - What can you or your family teach our classroom?*

As a culminating unit for the school year, I like students to reflect on what they have taught us in their classroom community and what they still can teach us. We end the year celebrating the assets of students as they create an informative essay and demonstration speech. Students begin reflecting on traditions or skills that are part of their family. I demonstrate by making egg noodles with the students, a tradition for the women in my family to make together on major holidays. I start by sharing pictures of our family making the noodles and explain the traditions of Christmas Eve dinner after church or for Thanksgiving lunch. Students and I then discuss all the traditions and skills that are part of my family and that I could research. We work on this project together throughout three weeks. I complete this project as my students and give the same speech on presentation day as a tenet of acompañamiento to work together in the hopes



of fellowship and engagement with one another (Sepulveda, 2011, p. 561). After brainstorming ideas, students create an informative essay. They end the project with a presentation of their traditions and why they are essential to their families or by demonstrating the skill they have researched. This project is meant to serve as a “bridge between home and school” (Gay, 2018, p. 78)

### **Informative Essay and Speech Project Design Overview.**

<b>Duration: about three weeks</b>	<b>Subject/Course: English as a New Language Level 2</b>
<b>Grade Level: 10, 11</b>	<b>Other subject areas to be included, if any: NA</b>
<b>Key Knowledge and Understanding</b> (CCSS or other standards)	<p>9-10.W.3.2</p> <p>Write <b>informative</b> compositions on a variety of topics that–</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions</li> <li>● Develop the topic utilizing credible sources with relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic.</li> <li>● Use appropriate transitions to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.</li> <li>● Choose language and content-specific vocabulary that express ideas precisely and concisely to manage the complexity of the topic, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Establish and maintain a style appropriate to the purpose and audience.</li> <li>● Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (<i>e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic</i>)</li> </ul> <p>9-10.SL.4.2</p> <p>Create engaging presentations that make strategic and creative use of digital media (<i>e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements</i>) to enhance audience understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence.</p>
<b>Project Summary</b>	Students will begin by brainstorming traditions or skills they can teach to the class. After finding a tradition or skill that has good research sources and will create enough material for an essay, they will write a rough draft, revise, and create a final draft. Next, students will create a demonstration or informative speech to teach their skill or tradition. Peers will reflect on one another's presentations.
<b>Driving Question</b>	What can we learn about one another's skills and traditions?
<b>Entry Event</b>	Pictures of my family traditions and discussion
<b>Individual Products</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Skills and traditions planning sheet</li> <li>● Rough Draft</li> <li>● Final draft</li> <li>● Presentation</li> </ul>
<b>Team/Group Products</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Peer edits</li> </ul>
<b>Specific content and success skills to be assessed</b>	Read, write, listen, and speak English
<b>Authentic Audience</b>	Presentations will be shared with the class and

	discussed.
<b>Resources Needed</b>	<p>Equipment: iPad; Apple TV for presentation</p> <p>Materials: Skills and traditions planning sheet, outline, essay rubric, presentation rubric (Available at Marquette's School of Education website <a href="http://www.marquette.edu/library/services/oral">Speech and Presentation Grading Rubric www.marquette.edu &gt; library &gt; services &gt; oral</a>)</p>

### Daily Unit Plan.

Day One:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Project Kickoff</li> <li>2. Brainstorm traditions and skills shown in my family photos</li> <li>3. Work on Skills and Traditions Planning Sheet</li> </ol>
Day Two:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conferences with teacher</li> <li>2. Finish and turn in Skills and Traditions Planning Sheet</li> </ol>
Day Three:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Begin Outline</li> <li>2. Conferences with the teacher</li> </ol>
Day Four:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Finish outline</li> <li>2. Conferences with the teacher</li> </ol>
Day Five - Six	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Begin rough draft</li> <li>2. Conferences with teacher</li> </ol>
Day Seven:	Peer Edit
Day Eight to Ten:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Begin final draft</li> <li>2. Conferences with teacher</li> </ol>
Day Eleven and Twelve:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work on presentation</li> <li>2. Conference with teacher</li> </ol>
Day Thirteen:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Paper due</li> <li>2. Give Presentations</li> <li>3. Write Reflections of peer presentations.</li> </ol>

## Handouts (not linked from other sources).

### Skills and Traditions Planning Sheet

What traditions, celebrations, or skills are part of your culture or family? (name at least 5)

For each of these, do a quick search. Can you find useful peer-reviewed sources that describe: origins, history, people or places associated with the tradition, and reasons for the tradition?

Write down notes in each column and copy and paste the URL so you can find it later. When this sheet is finished, you will conference with your teacher about the sources you found and which topic you should choose.

Topic	Origins	History	People or places	Reasons to practice

### Informative Essay Outline

Introduction:

Why is this topic important or useful?

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Thesis Statement:

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Body paragraph #1

Transition and introductory sentence that explicitly states what this paragraph will cover.

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Supporting Detail

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Explanation of Supporting detail

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Supporting Detail

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Explanation of Supporting detail

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Sentence explaining how these details are useful in supporting your thesis.

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Transition to next paragraph

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Body paragraph #2

Transition and introductory sentence that explicitly states what this paragraph will cover.

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Supporting Detail

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Explanation of Supporting detail

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Supporting Detail

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Explanation of Supporting detail

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Sentence explaining who these details are useful in supporting your thesis.

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Transition to next paragraph

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Body paragraph #3

Transition and introductory sentence that explicitly states what this paragraph will cover.

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Supporting Detail

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Explanation of Supporting detail

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Supporting Detail

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Explanation of Supporting detail

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Sentence explaining who these details are useful in supporting your thesis.

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Transition to next paragraph

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Conclusion

Overview of main points and significance of your thesis statement.

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### Informative essay peer edit sheet

#### Introduction

1. Does the introduction explain the importance of the topic?  
\_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No
2. Highlight the thesis statement.
3. Does this thesis statement persuade you to want to learn about the topic?  
\_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No

#### Body Paragraphs (Complete all steps for each one)

1. Are there details or concrete evidence used (cited material)?  
\_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No
2. Did you find this paragraph interesting? Why or Why not? What did you learn?

- 
3. Is there a citation for every quote used in the paragraph?  
\_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No
  4. Is there a word used repeatedly in this paragraph? \_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No (If so, underline it!)
  5. Are the sentences in this paragraph different lengths or all the same length?  
\_\_\_\_Different lengths \_\_\_\_The same length

#### Body Paragraphs (Complete all steps for each one)

1. Are there details or concrete evidence used (cited material)?  
\_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No
2. Did you find this paragraph interesting? Why or Why not? What did you learn?

- 
3. Is there a citation for every quote used in the paragraph?  
\_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No
  4. Is there a word used repeatedly in this paragraph? \_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No (If so, underline it!)
  5. Are the sentences in this paragraph different lengths or all the same length?  
\_\_\_\_Different lengths \_\_\_\_The same length

#### Body Paragraphs (Complete all steps for each one)

1. Are there details or concrete evidence used (cited material)?  
\_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No
2. Did you find this paragraph interesting? Why or Why not? What did you learn?

- 
3. Is there a citation for every quote used in the paragraph?

\_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No

4. Is there a word used repeatedly in this paragraph? \_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No (If so, underline it!)

5. Are the sentences in this paragraph different lengths or all the same length?

\_\_\_\_Different lengths \_\_\_\_The same length

Conclusion

1. Does the conclusion summarize the main points? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_No

2. Does the conclusion clarify the thesis? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_No

### Informative Essay Rubric

Category	Exemplary (2 points each)	Proficient (1.5 Points each)	Basic (1 point each)	Developing (.5 points each)	Total
Organization	<p>_Introduction explains use or importance.</p> <p>_ Thesis statement is clear and persuasive</p> <p>_Body paragraphs provide details and concrete evidence</p> <p>_ Concluding paragraph summarizes main points and reiterates thesis</p>	<p>_Introduction explains use or importance but may be missing details</p> <p>_ Thesis statement is clear OR persuasive</p> <p>_Body paragraphs provide either details OR concrete evidence</p> <p>_ Concluding paragraph summarizes main points OR reiterates thesis</p>	<p>_Introduction does not explain use or importance.</p> <p>_ Thesis statement is unclear</p> <p>_Body paragraphs provide some details but do not back up thesis statements</p> <p>_ Concluding paragraph is present but seems off topic</p>	<p>_Introduction is present</p> <p>_Missing thesis statement</p> <p>_ Body paragraphs are unclear or hard to understand</p> <p>_ Conclusion is present</p>	
Content	<p>_Interesting examples</p> <p>_ Explanations are thorough and persuade the reader</p> <p>_Citations are</p>	<p>_ Examples are sometimes off topic</p> <p>_ Explanations are thorough OR persuade</p>	<p>_ Missing several examples</p> <p>_ Explanations are missing or unclear</p> <p>_Citations are</p>	<p>_Evidence and examples address the task topic</p>	



	present and correct	the reader _Most Citations are present and correct	not present or incorrect		
Style and Language Use	_Sentence variety _ Use of varied vocabulary _Style fits purpose of topic	_Some sentence variety _ Some varied vocabulary _Style fits purpose OR topic	_Uses mostly simple sentences _ Repetitive vocabulary _Style is inconsistent	_Sentence style and vocabulary are not varied	
Conventions	_Only one or two grammar mistakes	_Three to six grammar issues	_Seven or more grammar issues	_Many errors	
TOTAL					

## **Appendix C - Policies**

These policies stem from ideas in response to what I learned as a researcher. The major policy change for secondary emergent bilinguals will be a scheduling grid for our counselors that meets graduation requirements and provides support for our students based on their needs and assets. This grid will take into account previous transcripts, languages, and future plans. Guidance counselors will use this grid to create schedules for students when meeting with their families.

As part of this grid, there will be tutoring opportunities for our students and chances to participate in yearbook and journalism classes within the study halls that highlight opportunities given to mainstream students but not the emergent bilinguals in our school. Therefore, the curriculum for yearbook and newspaper to highlight emergent bilinguals' assets will also be a part of the framework created in phase three. This policy section will also include an example of behavior plans designed to foreground students' assets when discipline procedures are necessary.

### **Create a team to determine student needs**

Many times when emergent bilinguals enter a public school for the first time in the United States, especially in a high school setting, they have an expectation or view of schools that may differ from the expectations in the state or school where they enroll. Additionally, some students come to school for the first time as teenagers or with no school records and have little knowledge about the way schools work. Therefore, it is essential to create a team of staff members who can brainstorm solutions for emergent bilinguals struggling with school schedules, expectations, or courses. By including staff members that listen and learn from the stories of students, we can create a culturally relevant environment where staff and students make a concentrated effort to work together and of "learning to be in a community with others by

'knowing, valuing, doing, caring, sharing power'" (Gay, 2018, p. 61). This framework is not exhaustive, but a start of a recursive process that includes listening and learning from students to create curriculum, policies, and solutions for their needs in a high school.

Our team of staff members for emergent bilinguals includes the director of guidance, assistant principal, and me, as the ELL coordinator. We meet weekly the first couple of months of school to discuss any student needs that may arise and as needed throughout the school year. However, there are other times we pull in adults that know the student well, such as emergent bilingual teacher aides, special education teachers, deans, or content area teachers that have created a relationship with the student. With this team, we can develop solutions for problems students communicate or problems staff members determine. Our team has created many solutions for tutoring and scheduling. Additionally, by listening to students' needs, we have also created groups for students to mentor one another.

One program that new students consistently state helped them integrate into the school is a peer mentoring program used for the first few days in the new school. In this program, we pair the new learner with another student who speaks the same native language or has been in the emergent bilingual program. The mentor students can show the new student around the school and take the new student to their classes for the first day or two. This program allows new students to spend the first few days in a new space learning about the schedules, people, and places in the school. After implementing this program, we realized that we needed to continue to have a space where students could gather with others struggling with a new environment. Students expressed a need for a community where they could feel a "culture of belonging" (Sepulveda, 2011, p. 558) and offer "fellowship and engagement with one another" (Sepulveda, 2011, p. 561). When discussing these needs in an emergent bilingual team meeting, our school

psychologist created focus groups for new students. This group is specifically for emergent bilinguals or foreign exchange students, where they could gather for an hour each week and talk about their concerns and feelings about being in a new school. This group also allowed students to ask questions in a safe environment about how to fit in by joining clubs and sports.

## **Schedules**

As we have created student schedules as a team the last three years, we have found a plan that helps students ease into the high school setting, especially if no school records are available from previous schools or language skills are extremely limited. We try to ease students into the school year by providing at least three periods in the ENL classroom. Since our school operates on a block schedule, two periods of the students' time, or one period every day, are spent in ENL classroom study hall. By providing this time, there are supports in place for each course on the menu below. The supports are staff members and peer tutors who are experts in the required subjects. The ENL team evaluates the two study hall approach each semester to determine whether the extra support is needed or whether the student can add classes to their schedule.

# ENL Student (to be freshman) –NO School Records Available –

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

*Full year courses are two credits, a one semester course is one credit	<i>ENL Study Hall x 2 (daily meeting with study hall in the ENL classroom where EL aides and peer tutors are able to work with student on English skills and other class needs. Student needs reevaluated by the ENL team each semester whether study hall is necessary every day or if student is able to add an elective in place of study hall )</i>	Your credit total needs to equal 12!  (No Credit for Study hall)
<u>English</u>	ENL English 1	2
<u>Math</u>	Algebra 1 and Algebra Lab  Earth and Space Science	2 ( and 2 for Lab)
<u>Science</u>	*Save for sophomore year so student can pick an elective and have 2 study halls	2
<u>Social Studies</u>		2

<b><u>Keystone/PE 1</u></b> (everyone is required to take)	<b>Keystone (Semester 1) / PE 1 (Semester 2)</b>		<b>2</b>
<b><u>Elective Choice #1</u></b>	<b>Course #</b>	<b>Course Name</b>	
<b><u>Elective Choice #2</u></b>	<b>Course #</b>	<b>Course Name</b>	
<b><u>Elective Choice #3</u></b>	<b>Course #</b>	<b>Course Name</b>	
<b><u>Elective Choice #4</u></b>	<b>Course #</b>	<b>Course Name</b>	

For the freshman students who have school records available and language skills deemed developing, a three or above on the WIDA scale, students have more choice in determining their schedule. They take ENL English and ENL study hall to build a community of learners and bring awareness to supports in place for language learners at our school.

## ENL Student (to be freshman) –School Records Available

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 1:** Choose 7 classes for both semesters and a few alternate classes. You can see your core course recommendations below - Please indicate your choices. For more information on any class you can visit the Academic Guide on the CGHS Guidance website!

*Full year courses are two credits, a one semester course is one credit	<i>ENL Study Hall (daily meeting with study hall in the ENL classroom where EL aides and peer tutors are able to work with student on English skills and other class needs.)</i>	Your credit total needs to equal 14!  (No Credit for Study hall)
<u>English</u>	ENL English 1	2
<u>Math</u>	Algebra 1  (Algebra Lab is an available option is student has limited math or language skills)	2  (and 2 for Lab)
<u>Science</u>	Earth and Space Science	2
<u>Social Studies</u>	Geography	2

<b><u>Keystone/PE 1</u></b> (everyone is required to take)	<b>Keystone (Semester 1) / PE 1 (Semester 2)</b>		<b>2</b>
<b><u>Elective Choice #1</u></b>	<b>Course #</b>	<b>Course Name</b>	
<b><u>Elective Choice #2</u></b>	<b>Course #</b>	<b>Course Name</b>	
<b><u>Elective Choice #3</u></b>	<b>Course #</b>	<b>Course Name</b>	
<b><u>Elective Choice #4</u></b>	<b>Course #</b>	<b>Course Name</b>	

As students complete their freshman year, the ENL counselor and I meet individually with each student to talk about their course plan for the following year. Most of the students do take ENL English 2 and stay in the ENL study hall to receive extra support. However, if a student wants to take a different course, we decide as a team, including the student. We continue this team meeting and a sample schedule for students who will be juniors (offering ENL English 3 and ENL study hall) and will be seniors (offering ENL English 4 and ENL study hall). As a team, we make recommendations and listen to each student's concerns before determining their schedule for the following year.



## **Freshman**(to be sophomores) : ENL STUDENTS

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 1:** Choose 7 classes for both semesters and a few alternate classes. Be sure you have teacher stamps if needed! You MUST have a teacher stamp for any HONORS/AP Course OR any class that requires a recommendation. (+ found on back of form). \*For more information regarding courses please refer to the academic guide on the CGHS Guidance website.

	<b>Course: Indicate Honors or Regular - Honors REQUIRES a teacher stamp!</b>  <b>*Full year courses are two credits, a one semester course is one credit</b>		<b>Your credit total needs to equal 14!</b>
<u>English</u>  <i>Stamps only needed for Honors, AP or Dual Credit</i>	Course #	Course Name: ENL ENGLISH 2	2
<u>Math</u>  <i>Must have teacher stamp</i>	Course #	Course Name	2
<u>Science</u>	Course #	Course Name	2
<u>PE2/Health</u>	PE2 (required)	Health	
<u>World Language</u>	Course #	Course Name	
<u>Social Studies</u>  <i>SS is an elective as a sophomore and not required</i>	Course #	Course Name	

<u><i>Elective Choice #1</i></u>	Course # ENL STUDY HALL	Course Name	
<u><i>Elective Choice #2</i></u>	Course #	Course Name	
<u><i>Elective Choice #3</i></u>	Course #	Course Name	
<u><i>Elective Choice #4</i></u>	Course #	Course Name	
<u><i>Elective Choice #5</i></u>	Course #	Course Name	

**Provide an area for extra-curricular activities and electives in the school day.**

In August of 2019, the superintendent of public instruction in Indiana released guidance for emergent bilinguals. One area where our school needed to address programming for emergent bilinguals is on the requirement for the teacher of record to supervise a time or provide a time for “development of English language instruction and supports of at least 30-45 minutes per day, 4-5 days a week in frequency and duration beyond standard English Language Arts instruction” (McCormick, 2019). Our school’s issue is that we were only providing English language instruction for emergent bilinguals in English as a New Language course, which counts toward credit for English Language Arts.

Consequently, the yearbook, newspaper, and media advisor had just met with me to brainstorm ideas for a more inclusive way of highlighting diverse students within their publications. In conjunction with the emergent bilingual team, we created a curriculum where a partnering journalism teacher would provide lesson plans once a week for use in thirty minutes

of each ENL study hall. Students would receive instruction one day for thirty minutes on writing articles, producing podcasts, and creating videos. The topics would focus on emergent bilinguals' ideas for peers to highlight in the yearbook, newspaper, or media outlet from our classroom community. The remainder of the week, students would spend thirty minutes working on their article, podcast, or video with the teacher, teacher aides, and peer tutors. The equipment for the journalism department would be available for use. The goal is to create enough articles and media for publication in the journalism mediums monthly. This addition to our study hall would allow students to practice all modes of English language development, and focus on the knowledge and assets they bring to our school.

## **Discipline**

Often with emergent bilinguals who are new to the school setting, or even our school setting, school rules can be hard for students to navigate and understand. Therefore, the emergent bilingual team needs to listen to student concerns and brainstorm ways to effectively use students' assets as we teach students to follow the mandated policies at the school. We have seen success with this is by creating behavior plans for students that rewards what they do well as they navigate new environments and policies. Before implementing the behavior plan, I review a draft of the plan with the student and seek their feedback and ideas. When students are involved in setting their own boundaries, there is ownership and responsibility shown. However, when the student is not involved in the creation of the plan, the student does not show the same ownership of a mandated plan.

In the behavior contract example below, the student was highly motivated by his cell phone. Therefore, we tried to include this as a reward and consequence. The student went from over thirty tardies in one semester to staying under five tardies and was only dismissed from a

classroom for insubordination once in the entire second semester of school. Using the student's ideas as a reward and consequence, we saw a definite improvement in following school rules and policies.

### **J's Behavior Contract.**

<b>J responsibilities</b>	<b>Reward</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	
<b>Tardies</b>	Stays below 5 tardies for the semester, J gets a lunch of his choice in May	If tardy to class, must turn in phone to dean in ISS the next day on 5th tardy and beyond all day	
<b>Cell Phone</b>	If no cell phone incidents are reported for the day, J can use his cell phone in ENL study hall for 20 minutes uninterrupted after his work is completed.	If he is using his cell phone during class, his parents will be notified. He will turn in his phone during ENL study hall. If the phone continues to be an issue, it will be turned in each day to the dean or ENL teacher.	
<b>Insubordination</b> J will follow the teacher's directions when asked. J will not argue with the teacher/aide/adult. If there is an issue, J may ask to remove himself to speak to the ENL teacher, dean, or counselor	If after 2 weeks, Jamal has no incidences of insubordination he will receive a half hour of free time in ENL study hall.	If J does not follow the insubordination directions, he will receive a lunch detention in the ISS room.	
<b>Grades</b>	J will receive a "surprise" reward if J is missing less than 10 assignments in all of his classes. (Reward to be determined by J and ENL teacher)		

## Curriculum Vitae

Erin McNeill

### ENGLISH AND LANGUAGE LEARNER SPECIALIST

#### Educational Leadership / Online Course Creation / Program Coordinator

Enthusiastic educational professional offering 16 years of experience in teaching English, literature, English as a new language, education and literacy subjects to high school, undergraduate, and graduate students, and managing classes of all sizes to promote student growth and achievement. Leadership expertise supervising aides and serving students across multiple schools, with talent in creating and implementing a variety of education and English curriculum, including Advanced Placement (AP) and English learner courses. Proven ability to investigate issues, disseminate data, maintain academic standards, and promote advancement in English, education, and literacy subjects. Organized and able to quickly build rapport with colleagues and students.

#### *Core competencies include:*

- English & Literacy Instruction
- Policy Design & Implementation
- Curriculum Development
- Interpersonal Skills / Relationship Building
- Project Management & Problem Solving
- Instructional Systems Technology
- Dynamic and Enthusiastic Teaching
- Team Collaboration
- Education Issues & Project Knowledge
- Research Management and Design

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### EDUCATION & CREDENTIALS

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INDIANA UNIVERSITY — Bloomington, IN

**Ed.D. Literacy, Culture and Language Education 2020**

**Department of Curriculum and Instruction**

Dissertation: "Immigration Stories in the English Learner Classroom: Revealing Funds of Knowledge and Brave Spaces in the Literacy Curriculum"

***Minor in Instructional Systems Technology***

***ESL certification***

**Graduate Certificate in Composition Studies** (18 credit hours in English coursework)

**Master of Science in Education**, Concentration in Literacy, Culture, Language Education

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN INDIANA — Evansville, IN

**Bachelor of Arts in Education**, Concentration in English; Minor in Middle School Education

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### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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**ELL PROGRAM COORDINATOR** (2017 – Present)

Create curriculum and policies for the revamping of an English as a New Language program. Training teachers and aides across the district in language education and culturally relevant pedagogy. Taught undergraduate level English courses and English as a New Language Courses.

***Selected accomplishments:***

- Create professional development for all staff
- Serve on English Learner Leadership Team and Professional Learning Community Leadership Team for the district
- Create professional development and newsletters for staff
- 87% of student's English proficiency scores rose on WIDA in first year as EL program coordinator, 90% in year two
- School wide program design for secondary English learners

INDIANA UNIVERSITY, Bloomington, IN

**GRADUATE ASSISTANT FOR DEPARTMENT CHAIR of LITERACY, CULTURE AND LANGUAGE EDUCATION (2018 -2020)**

Fulfilling requirements as necessary for the Chair of Language Education: grant writing, teaching courses, student conferences, committee work, planning conferences, and proofreading articles.

***Selected accomplishments:***

- Advising online graduate courses for ACP English Pipeline Project – free graduate courses to current teachers working toward 18 credit hours above master's degree work in English.
- Interning for Graduate level Ed.D. courses – L795 Dissertation Proposal Prep; L700 Argumentative Writing; L600 Theoretical Foundations
- Onboarding graduate students through Learning Management Systems
- Revise a 700 level online literacy education course for graduate students "Working with New Texts and Technologies."

INDIANA UNIVERSITY, Columbus, IN

**ADJUNCT EDUCATION INSTRUCTOR (IUPUC, 2016 – present)**

Instructor of Education 340 and 341 (Methods of Teaching Reading 1 and 2 for Elementary education majors) and X470 (Psycholinguistics). Created screencasts and videos for online and hybrid courses, and designed curriculum based on local school systems' needs and specifications.

***Selected accomplishments:***

- Redesigned reading course screencasts
- Assisted in developing and teaching online literacy education courses

COLUMBUS EAST HIGH SCHOOL, Columbus, IN

**ENGLISH TEACHER (2014 – 2017)**

Taught English and Language Arts courses to 9<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades; mentored students as they completed senior community service projects and created electronic documents for use by seniors and community mentors; and designed staff curriculum and professional development, based on literacy methods.

***Selected accomplishments:***

- Mentor a yearbook staff in all developmental phases of writing to proofreading and editing.
- Utilized scaffolding and UDL strategies, and legitimized student knowledge improving ESL students' WIDA proficiency level scores by two levels in one year.

- Implemented Universal Design for Learning standards receiving an effective rating three years in a row.

IVY TECH COMMUNITY COLLEGE, Madison, IN  
**ADJUNCT ENGLISH INSTRUCTOR (2011 – 2015)**

Taught English Composition courses in person and online, tutored students in writing, and distributed grades and reports. Collaborated with the English team to design curriculum and objectives for courses.

***Selected accomplishment:***

- Developed a remedial English course (English 093) and administered pilot tests.

SHAWEE MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL, Madison, IN  
**ENGLISH TEACHER (2010 – 2014)**

Developed curriculum for English, journalism, speech, and etymology classes, and supervised student teachers. Sponsored extracurricular activities that included mentoring a yearbook staff that won “Yearbook of the Year” three years in a row. Created and coached a Spell Bowl team who won the regional competition their first year. Wrote press releases on the team for local newspapers.

***Selected accomplishment:***

- Attended training on school standards and how they related to Common Core criteria. The school earned a four-star status based partly on English ISTEP scores.

SWITZERLAND COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL, Vevay, IN  
**ENGLISH TEACHER (2005 – 2010)**

Produced curriculum for three English courses, and sponsored writing, interviewing, and editing courses for a student-led newspaper. Communicated on a regular basis with students’ parents and answered parent emails. Directed the drama club and coached a varsity and junior varsity cheerleading squad.

***Selected accomplishment:***

- Wrote a proposal/grant to the school foundation for training to create and implement the school’s first AP program that included AP English Literature and Composition as a course.

***Presentations***

“Apathy to Empathy: Identifying Strategies for Developing Critically Conscious Students and Communities,” 2017 –

Michigan State University

“Using Podcasts to Teach Literacy Skills,” 2018 – University of Saint Francis

“Local, Global, and Transnational Flows in the Classroom: What Does Cosmopolitan Literacy Look Like?” 2018 –

International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry University of Illinois

“Twitter chats and Team Glitter” 2018 – International Conference of Literacy, Culture and Language Education Indiana

University

“Teaching the Canon in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Classroom” 2018 National Council of Teachers of English

“Delighting in Difference, Cultivating the Cosmopolitan: Valuing the Voices of Others” 2019 National Council of

Teachers of English Assembly for Research

“Coalition Across Difference” 2019 New Directions in the Humanities – Universidad de Granada

“Expanding the Canon: New Voices, New Inquiry, New Ideas” 2019 National Council of Teachers of English

“Using Artifactual Literacy to Gather Funds of Knowledge” 2020 National Council of Teachers of English Assembly for Research

“Digital Immigration Stories” 2020 International Conference for Literacy, Culture, and Language Education Indiana University

### ***Professional Service***

Armbruster, K., Lisak, M., **McNeill, E.**, Perry, C., and Ray, J. (2019). Multimodal discourse analysis. In Samuelson, B. L., Frye, J. M. Hare, S. & Covington, M. (Eds.). *Short guides in education research methodologies*. Bloomington, IN: IU Pressbooks. Retrieved from

<https://iu.pressbooks.pub/lcle700resguides/chapter/multimodal-discourse-analysis/>

Indiana Department of Education. *Guidebook for Secondary English Learners*. [In Press]

International Conference for Literacy, Culture, and Language Education planning committee 2020

### ***Publications***

**McNeill, E.** & Hines, M.B. (2018). “Canonical Texts and Cultural Critique with English Learners.” In M. Macaluso & K. Macaluso (Eds.) *Teaching the cannon in 21<sup>st</sup> century classrooms*, chapter 13. Boston: Brill Sense.

### ***Affiliations***

National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) • Indiana Council of Teachers of English (ICTE) • Indiana State Teachers Association (ISTA)